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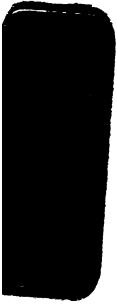


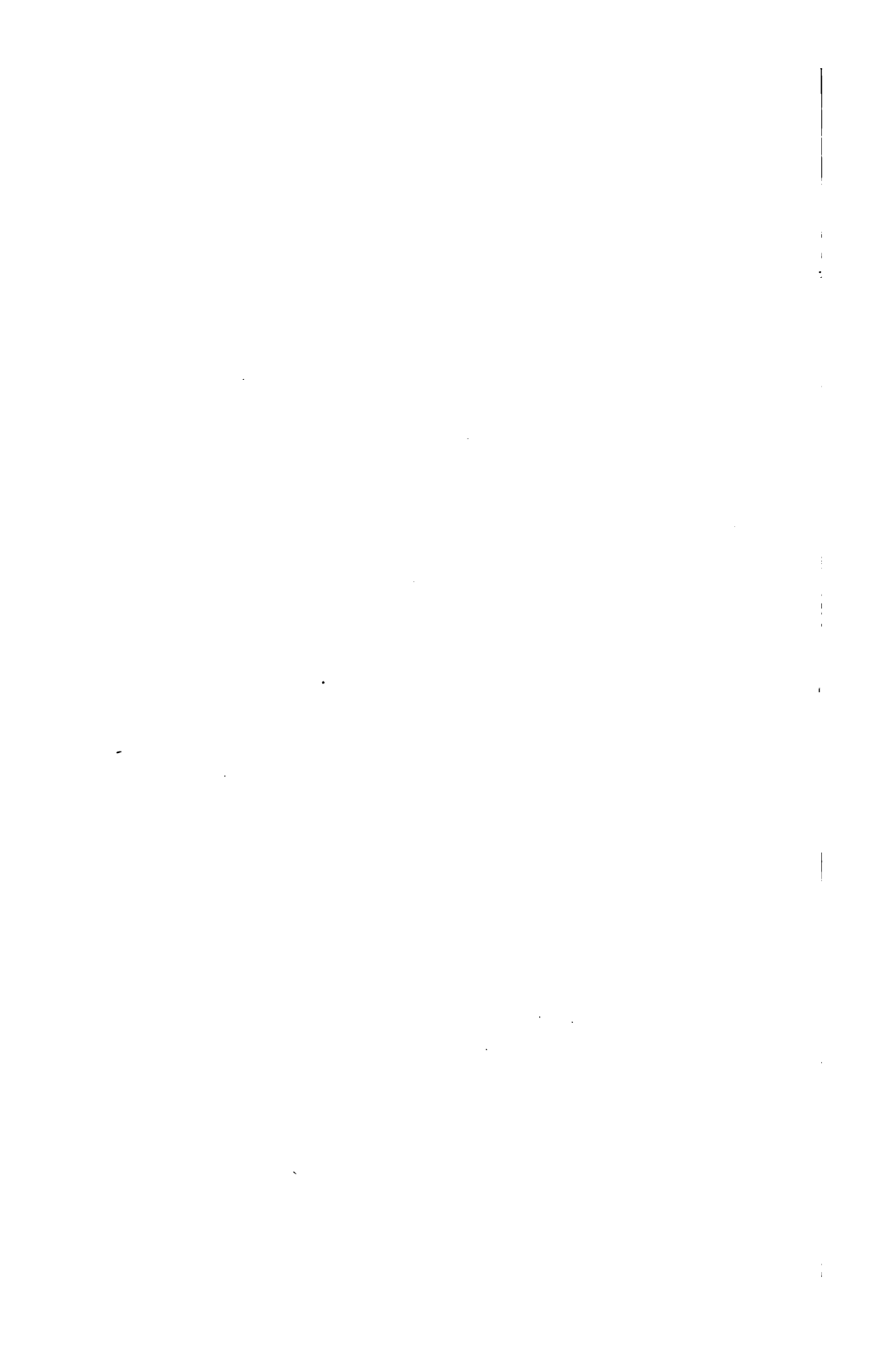
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S M O K E.



S M O K E;

OR,

LIFE AT BADEN.

A NOVEL.

By J. TOURGUENEF.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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S M O K E .

CHAPTER I.

AT four o'clock on the 10th August, 1862, a crowd was collected before the celebrated *Salon de Conversation* at Baden-Baden. The weather was delightful; the green trees, the white houses of the pretty old town, and the hills which rise above it, all breathed an air of gladness and festivity in the rays of a dazzling sun; all nature smiled, and a reflexion of that joyous and varying smile pervaded every face, whether young or old, good-looking or plain.

Even the white and painted faces of the Parisian *lorettes* themselves could not succeed in marring this expression of universal joyfulness; the various coloured ribbons, the plumes, and the gilt and steel glittering ornaments upon bonnets and veils, recalled to the eye the animated splendour and the fluttering of spring flowers and variegated wings: but the clamorous tones of their French jargon bore no resemblance to the warbling of birds.

Everything was proceeding as usual. The band in the pavilion was performing sometimes a medley from *La Traviata*, sometimes a waltz by Strauss, or *Dites-lui*, a Russian air composed by the obsequious conductor; in the gaming-rooms, around the green cloth, crowded the same faces, with the same stupid, desperate, rapacious, almost ferocious, expression; that eager, greedy look which the excitement of play stamps upon

the most aristocratic features. You might have seen there the same obese proprietor from Tambov, dressed with the most exquisite bad taste, uselessly and convulsively excited (like his late father when he was thrashing his serfs), his eyes half out of his head, and resting the half of his body upon the table without heeding the cold smiles of the croupiers, who exclaimed, as they piled up louis-d'or at each corner of the table, "*Rien ne va plus!*" thus depriving himself of all possibility of gain, whatever might have been his chance. This in the evening did not prevent him, however, from repeating, with the most sympathetic indignation, the remarks of Prince Coco, one of the popular leaders of the aristocratic Opposition—the same Prince Coeo who, in Paris, at a party given by the Princess Mathilde, in the presence of the emperor had so admirably said, "*Ma-*

dame, le principe de la propriété est profondément ébranlé en Russie."

Around the *Arbre Russe* were assembled as usual our dear country of both sexes, approaching each other with aristocratic nonchalance, and exchanging salutations with a gracefulness and elegance worthy of beings placed upon the highest step of the social ladder. But once seated, they no longer knew what to talk about to kill time, and were reduced to the necessity of descending from frivolous conversation to silence, or of laughing at the stale jests, always dull and frequently coarse, of an ex-littérateur from Paris; a buffoon and a babbler, who wore a wretched tuft of beard upon his chin and vile boots upon his awkward feet. There was not a silly joke taken from old almanacs, and from the pages of the 'Charivari' and the 'Tintamarre,' which this facetious gentle-

man did not compel these Russian princes and princesses to swallow, and at which they did not explode with grateful laughter; thus involuntarily acknowledging the superiority of foreign genius as well as their own utter powerlessness to invent amusement.

Nevertheless, the flower of our society was there, and our most exquisite types almost without exception. There was the Count X——, our incomparable dilettante, a profound musical character, who sang so divinely, although he could scarcely read a note, and his voice was something between that of a hoarse street brawler and a Parisian barber, a frequenter of the Opéra-Comique. There was our irresistible Baron Z——, apt at everything; a scholar and statesman; an orator and linguist. There was the Prince Y——, the friend of religion and the people, who, during the fortunate

period of brandy-producing, had made a colossal fortune by manufacturing it from bella-donna. There was the brilliant General O——, who had vanquished somebody and conquered some place, but yet who had not a word to say for himself, and had the utmost difficulty in controlling his arms and legs. There was P——, an amusing old fellow, who believed himself to be a great invalid and of great intellect, although he was as strong as an ox and as stupid as a block; he alone remained faithful to the traditions of the epoch of the *Heroes of our own Time*, and of the Countess Vorotinski: he had preserved “*la culte de la pose*,” the habit of walking upon his toes with affected slowness, of wearing upon his immovable and somnolent features an expression of solemn pride, of interrupting any person with whom he might be conversing, of laughing

with a strange nasal laugh, of attentively examining his nails and fingers, and of constantly thrusting his hat from his brows to his nape, and *vice versâ*. There were statesmen, diplomatists bearing European names, men of extensive information and sound understanding, imagining that the golden bull was given by the Pope, and that the poor-tax is an impost upon the poor. There were, lastly, ardent, although timid, admirers of the camélias, young dandies with their hair scrupulously parted in the centre from the forehead to the nape, and magnificent whiskers reaching down to their shoulders, wearing nothing about them that did not come from London. They lacked nothing, one would have thought, to make them the rivals of the buffoon from Paris; but yet our ladies neglected them. The Countess C—— herself, the acknowledged leader of society, surnamed by wicked

tongues, "the queen of the wasps," and "Medusa in a bonnet," preferred, in the absence of the buffoon, to favour the Italians, the Moldavians, the 'cute Americans, the secretaries of foreign ambassadors, or even the young German barons, with the faces of usurers, who kept fluttering around her. Around this star were stationed the Princess Babette, the same in whose arms Chopin expired (there are something like a thousand ladies in Europe who had that honour); the Princess Annette, whom no one could have resisted, if suddenly, like the smell of cabbage mingled with that of amber, they had not discovered something in her which reminded them of a coarse village laundress; the unfortunate Princess Pachette: her husband had been promoted to a post in the country, under government, and all at once, nobody knew why, had beaten the mayor of his town, and absconded with 20,000

roubles belonging to the crown ; and lastly, the noisy Mademoiselle Ziska and the sentimental Mademoiselle Zozo ; and all these ladies abandoned their countrymen, treating them with coolness and indifference. We also must leave these enchanting ladies, and move away from the famous tree under the shade of which are being displayed so many toilets, in which bad taste carries the day against expense, and may heaven alleviate the *ennui* which is consuming them !

CHAPTER II.

A FEW yards from the "Arbre Russe," before a small table of the Weber Café, was sitting a man of some thirty years of age, of middle stature, slight, sunburnt, and with features at once manly and pleasing. With both hands resting upon his walking-stick, he sat with the tranquil air of a man who has not an idea that anybody can observe or trouble themselves about him. His large brown and expressive eyes slowly wandered over the surrounding objects; sometimes the sun made him wink a little, sometimes he looked after some eccentric

figure who passed before him, and then a slight, almost boyish smile would play round his lips, which were surmounted by a handsome moustache. He wore a paletot in the German fashion, and a felt hat half covered his broad forehead. At the first glance, he struck you as being a good-looking, active young man, not having a very poor opinion of himself, like many others in the world. He seemed to be taking his rest after a long course of labour, and to take the more pleasure in the picture which he had before his eyes, as his thoughts habitually moved amidst scenes very different from that which surrounded him at that moment. He was a Russian, and his name was Gregory Mikhailovitch* Litvinof.

* Mikhailovitch means, son of Michael. It is usual in Russia thus to associate with names the memory of the father.

It will be necessary for us to make his acquaintance, and consequently we must briefly relate his past history, in which otherwise there would have been nothing worthy of attention.

The son of an employer in some mercantile capacity, he had been brought up in a village. His mother was of noble descent, and of an enthusiastic and energetic character: younger by twenty years than her husband, she endeavoured to the extent of her abilities to give him some education, to draw him out of the dull routine of the office, and to smooth down and soften his rude and harsh character. Thanks to her, he began to dress himself decently, and to put on civilized manners, to leave off swearing, to esteem science and educated people, although, be it understood, he never read himself; he had even brought himself to walk upright and less hurriedly, and to

speaking tolerably well of elevated subjects, which had caused him no little pains. Sometimes nature would get the upperhand, and he would mutter between his teeth when anyone annoyed him, "Oh! I should like to give you a thrashing!" but he immediately added aloud, "Yes, no doubt; the question is worth consideration."

Litvinof's mother had placed her house upon a European footing; she did not treat her servants with too much familiarity, and never allowed anyone to eat gluttonously at her table. As for her estate, neither she herself nor her husband had ever known how to manage it. It was of considerable extent, but very much neglected; consisting of meadows, woods, and a lake, upon the banks of which had formerly stood a manufactory, built by a previous owner with more zeal than experience, which had prospered in the hands of a cunning merchant, but

since fallen into decay, after passing into those of an honest German contractor. Madame Litvinof was satisfied so long as she got a livelihood without contracting debts. Unfortunately she was of weak constitution, and died of consumption during the same year that her son entered the University of Moscow.

Circumstances which the reader will understand in the course of this story, prevented Gregory Litvinof from completing his studies; he returned to the country, where he lived for some time without occupation, without relations, almost without acquaintances. He had received little kindness from the gentlefolks of his district, who were much less impressed with the Western theory of evils which is entailed by ~~absenteeism~~ *absenteeism*, than the truth of our old Eastern proverb, "Nothing is so near to your body as your shirt," which induced him to enrol

himself among the patriotic volunteers of 1855.

Litvinof nearly died of fever in the Crimea, where, without seeing a single ally, he lived in a turf hut on the shores of the Black Sea for six months. He afterwards filled some elective office in his native province, with the usual discomfort; and after living some time in the country he began to acquire a taste for agriculture. He saw that the estate of his mother, very badly managed by his **aged father, did** not yield the tenth part of what it might have been made to yield in skilful hands; but he understood at the same time that he wanted experience, and in order to gain that he began to travel for the purpose of seriously studying agronomy and technology. He passed nearly four years in Mecklenburgh, Silesia, and Carlsruhe; he visited Belgium and England, and devoted

himself diligently to the acquisition of knowledge. He had found the task which he had set himself no easy one, but had untiringly pursued these studies to the last; and now, sure of himself, sure of the future, and of the good he could do to his neighbourhood — who could tell, perhaps even the whole of Russia—he was preparing to return to his inheritance, whither he was constantly being called by his father, who found himself completely overturned by the emancipation of the serfs, and all the measures proceeding from it. But why then was he stopping at Baden?

He was at Baden because he there daily expected to meet his cousin and intended, Tatiana Petrovna Chestof. He had known her almost from his childhood, and had passed the last summer with her at Dresden, where she had been living with her aunt.

He sincerely loved and deeply esteemed his young relation, and, on the point of terminating his obscure preparatory labours, and of entering upon a new career, he had offered her the opportunity of connecting her life with his, *for better for worse*, as the English say. She had consented, and he had hastily returned to Carlsruhe for his books and papers. But why, you ask me again, was he at Baden?

Because Tatiana's aunt, Capitoline Markovna Chestof, an old lady of some fifty-five years, eccentric, almost ridiculous, but kind and attached even to self-denial, a free-thinker—she read Strauss, but unknown to her niece—and a democrat, and a sworn enemy of fashion and the aristocracy, had not been able to resist the temptation of casting, for once at least, a glance over that same fashion in a place so elegant as Baden. Capitoline Markovna never wore

crinoline, and her white hair was always cut short. Luxury and show were constant sources of trouble to her, and nothing could have given her greater pleasure than an opportunity of openly expressing the contempt with which all these vanities inspired her. What possible objection was there to satisfying the good old lady?

And that was why Litvinof was sitting there so calmly and looking about him with so much assurance. His future life appeared to be without an obstacle, his destiny was marked out, and he was the more proud and glad of that destiny, as he considered it as the creation of his own hands.

CHAPTER III.

“Поох! pooh! pooh! here he is!” abruptly exclaimed a shrill voice in his ear, while a heavy hand was laid upon his shoulder. He turned his head and recognized a slight Moscovite acquaintance, a certain Bambaef, a good fellow enough, but nobody in particular. Already on his return journey, this gentleman had cheeks and a nose which looked as though they had been cooked, a rough greasy head of hair, and a body as thick and unwieldy as a beer-barrel. Always without a shilling in his pocket, and always enthusiastic about something, Rostislaf Bambaef wandered

without object, but not without noise, over the wide surface of our common mother, the earth.

"This is what I call a meeting," he continued, opening his puffed eyes and advancing his thick lips, upon which was a miserably little dyed moustache. "This is what you call Baden! everybody comes crowding here like a lot of crickets behind a stove! What on earth brings you here?"

Bambaef was on familiar terms with the whole universe.

"I have been here four days," replied Litvinof.

"And where did you come from?"

"What has that to do with you?"

"What has that to do with me! but wait a moment, perhaps you don't know who is also here? Goubaref himself in person! He arrived from Heidelberg yesterday. You know him, of course?"

“I have heard of him.”

“No more? I will take you to see him at once. Not know such a man! Here comes Vorochilof. Perhaps you don't know him? I shall have the honour of introducing you to each other. You are both scholars. He is a perfect phoenix. You must embrace each other.”

With these words, Bambaef turned towards a handsome young man, with a fresh and rosy face, which already had a serious expression. Litvinof rose, but dispensed with embracing the “Phoenix,” who, to judge by the gravity of his looks, was very little flattered by this unexpected introduction.

“I said a ‘phoenix,’ and I won't recall that expression,” continued Bambaef. “Go to the college of St. Petersburg, and look at the list of honour; what name will you find upon the first line? That of Simon Jakov-

levitch Vorochilof. But Goubaref, Goubaref! Come, my friends, we will go to his house at once. I reverence that man, and in that I am not alone. Everybody worships him, without exception. What a work he is writing now!"

"Upon what subject is this work?" inquired Litvinof.

"Upon everything, my friend. It is a work after the style of Buckle, only more profound. Everything will be settled and brought to the proof."

"You have read it then?"

"No, I have not read it. In fact, it is a mystery which he is very careful to keep from everyone; but we may expect everything from Goubaref, everything!" Here Bambaef heaved a sigh, and crossed his arms. "By Jove! what a thing it would be if there were but two or three heads like his in Russia! You will find, Gregory

Mikhailovitch, whatever have been your occupations lately (and I really forget what is your occupation in general)—whatever may be your convictions, respecting which I am equally ignorant—that you will have much to learn from Goubaref. Unfortunately, he is here only for a short time. We must profit by the time he is here. Come along, come with me to his house. Come, off we go, gentlemen!”

At that moment an exquisite, with red curly hair, covered with a hat decorated with a piece of sky-blue ribbon, passed, staring at Bambaef with a sarcastic smile. Litvinof was quite vexed.

“Why do you excite yourself so?” he inquired at length. One would suppose you were calling after dogs which had lost the scent. I have not dined yet.”

“If that is all, we can dine together at Weber’s at once. All three; that will be

delightful.—You have some money to pay my part?" he added in a whisper.

"Yes, I have; but, really, I don't know"——

"Say no more, my dear fellow, you will thank me, and he will be delighted.—Ah! by Jove!" exclaimed Bambaef, suddenly, "it is the finale of *Hernani* that they are playing. How beautiful! *Oh! som—mo Carlo*. What a fellow I am! here I am in tears. Come along, Simon Jakovlevitch, let us go."

Vorochilof, who had remained immovable and reserved, frowned, cast down his eyes with dignity, and muttered something between his teeth, but did not refuse the arrangement, and Litvinof also yielded himself up with resignation. Bambaef passed his arm through that of the latter; but before advancing towards the café, he made a sign to Isabella, the well-known flower-girl

of the Jockey Club, that he desired a bouquet. The aristocratic florist did not move; how was it possible for her to approach a gentleman without gloves, and muffled up in a plush vest, a ridiculous scarf, and boots worn down at the heels? Vorochilof then made a sign to her. She condescended to come forward, and having chosen from her basket a small bouquet of violets, he threw her a florin. He intended to have surprised her by his generosity; but Isabella did not even move her eyebrows, and when he had turned his back, her lips contracted into an ironical smile. Vorochilof was dressed with elegance, even with taste; however, the practised eye of the Parisian girl had immediately detected something in his costume, his figure, or his walk, which had a military stiffness about it, the absence of all traces of high-breeding.

When they were seated in the principal

room at Weber's, and had ordered their dinner, our friends began to converse. Bambaef returned with much warmth, shouting and gesticulating, about the extraordinary merits of Goubaref; however he soon became silent, and contented himself with sighing, as he swallowed glass after glass. Vorochilof eat and took little, seeming to have no appetite. Having questioned Litvinof respecting his occupations, he began to express his own personal opinions, less upon his own occupations than upon various "questions." He gradually became animated, and began to talk very fast, with a profusion of energetic but incoherent gestures; emphasizing each syllable, like a schoolboy who is sure of his exercise at an examination. The longer he went on, the more eloquent and argumentative he became; nobody, it is true, attempting to interrupt him. He seemed to be reading an essay or a lesson. The names of

contemporaneous savants, with the precise dates of their birth and their decease, the titles of the most recent pamphlets, but especially celebrated names,—names of all countrymen, and in every grade of literature, art, and science,—came from his lips with such precipitation, that they seemed to be engaged in a race of life or death after each other; and this nomenclature caused him an enjoyment which his eyes were unable to conceal. Vorochilof despised everything that was ancient, and had no admiration for anything but that which science had recently discovered. To quote the book of a certain Doctor Zanerbengel upon the prisons of Pennsylvania, or an article upon the Vedas in the last number of the ‘Asiatic Journal’ (he always said journal, although he did not speak English), was his delight.

Litvinof listened to him without being able to learn what was his speciality.

Among a crowd of other subjects, he spoke of the part the Celtic race had played in history; and that taking him back into the ancient world, he reasoned upon the marbles of Ægina, and enlarged upon Donatus, the predecessor of Phidias, of whom he made Jonathan, thus giving to his discourse an aspect half biblical, half profane; from that subject he sprang with one bound into political economy, setting Bastiat down for a fool, "no better than Adam Smith, and all the rest of the physiocrates."

"Physiocrates! aristocrats!" repeated Bambaef, in a whisper.

Sometimes Vorochilof succeeded in surprising Bambaef himself by calling Macaulay a retrograde writer; as for Gneist and Riehl, he declared that they were scarcely worth naming, and gave emphasis to the words by shrugging his

shoulders, in which Bambaef followed his example.

“And he is parading all this, without motive, before strangers, in a café,” thought Litvinof, as he followed the fantastic movements of his new acquaintance, and looked over his fair hair, his clear blue eyes, and his teeth as white as ivory. “It does not seem to strike him for a moment that there is anything absurd in himself. He appears to me a good fellow enough, but terribly inexperienced.”

Vorochilof cooled down at length; his shrill voice, which had become as hoarse as that of a crow, broke down all at once.

Then Bambaef volunteered to recite some verses, and was very near bursting into tears, to the great scandal of the right-hand table, at which an English family were sitting; and to the amusement of

the left-hand table, where two ladies of the *demi-monde* were dining with a *young man* with a black wig.

The waiter brought the bill, and our friends rose from the table

"Now," exclaimed Bambaef, springing from his chair, "a cup of coffee, and off we go! There you see our Russia," he added, as he stood upon the threshold of the door, pointing triumphantly with his red hand towards Vorochilof and Litvinof.

"Yes, that is Russia," thought Litvinof. As for Vorochilof, he had already put on his air of dignity again; he smiled coldly as he knocked his toes together in military style.

Five minutes after, all three were ascending the stairs of the house where lodged Stephen Nicolaevitch Goubaref. A tall lady, with a short veil over her bonnet,

was just coming down; on perceiving Litvinof she paused as though thunder-struck. She first turned red and then pale; but seeing that Litvinof did not observe her, she hastily ran down stairs.

CHAPTER IV.

"GREGORY LITVINOF, a true Russian and a good fellow, I recommend him to you," exclaimed Bambaef, as he conducted Litvinof towards a man of short stature in morning costume and slippers, who was sitting in a large and handsomely furnished room. "This is he," he added to Litvinof, "this is himself; this, in a word, is Goubaref."

Litvinof considered the gentleman to whom he was thus introduced with attention. At the first glance, he saw nothing extraordinary in him. He saw before him a man of respectable appearance, rather

dull-looking than otherwise, with a broad forehead, thick lips, a long beard, a bull neck, and eyes which looked upon the ground from beneath a pair of bushy eyebrows. This gentleman smiled and said, "M'm—m'm—. How do you do? I am very much pleased——" Then he put his hand to his beard, and turning his back upon Litvinof, began to walk up and down the velvet carpet with the slow and gliding movement of a cat. It was a habit of Goubaref to pace up and down his room and pull out his beard with his long nails. With him in the room was a lady in a worn silk dress, having a face as yellow as a citron, with a number of black hairs upon her upper lip, and eyes so brilliant that they looked ready to start from her head; there was besides a stout individual who sat half-double in one corner.

“Well, my dear Matrena Semenovna,” said Goubaref, turning towards the lady, and probably not thinking it necessary to introduce Litvinof to her, “what was it you had commenced relating to us?”

The lady (her name was Madame Soukhauchikof—was a widow without children and without fortune, who for the last two years had been transporting her troubles from one country to another) immediately continued her story with singular volubility :

“Well, he introduced himself to the prince, and said, ‘Your Excellency is in a powerful position and can relieve my distress; condescend to take into consideration the purity of my intentions. Ought a person, in the present century, to be prosecuted for his sincere convictions?’ Now, what do you think the prince did—

that civilized statesman, that man occupying so lofty a station?"

"What did he do?" inquired Goubaref, lighting a cigarette, with a dreamy look.

The lady drew herself up in her chair and extended her bony hand. "He called his lackey and said to him, 'Take that man's coat off directly, and keep it; I make you a present of it.'"

"And the lackey took it off!" demanded Bambaef, clasping his hands.

"He took it off and kept it. And that is what Prince Barnaoulof did; a man famous for his wealth, a nobleman, furnished with unlimited power and the representative of the government. What can we hope for after that?"

Suddenly the slender body of Madame Soukhautchikof trembled with emotion; her lace was agitated, her meagre bosom swelled under her corset, and her eyes seemed

ready to shoot from her head; a danger, indeed, which they ran at all times, whatever was the subject of conversation.

"It is an affair which cries for vengeance!" exclaimed Bambaef. "There is no punishment sufficiently terrible!"

"H'm—h'm—It is all rotten from top to bottom," remarked Goubaref, without raising his voice. "It is not a punishment that is necessary here, but some other measure."

"But is that really true?" said Litvinof.

"Is it true!" exclaimed Madame Soukhautchikof. "Why, it is impossible to doubt it." She pronounced the word *impossible* with such energy that she almost bent double. "I had it from the most veracious of men. Why you must know him, Stephen Nicolaitcht; it was Helistratof Capiton, and he had it from eye-witnesses of the disgusting scene."

“What Helistratof?” asked Goubaref.

“Was it he who was at Kazan?”

“The same person. I know there was a rumour spread about that he took money from the brandy-producers, but who was it that said so? Pelikanof; and who would put any faith in Pelikanof, when it is well known to all the world that he is simply a spy!”

“No, excuse me, Matrena Semenovna,” exclaimed Bambaef; “Pelikanof is a friend of mine; how can he be a spy?”

“Yes, yes, he is a spy!”

“You must pardon me——”

“A spy! a spy!” cried Madame Soukhautchikof.

“No, really; will you listen to me?” shouted Bambaef in his turn.

“A spy! a spy!” maintained the lady.

“No, no! If you were to say that of

Tenteléef, I should agree with you," bellowed Bambaef.

Madame Soukhautchikof was obliged to take breath: Bambaef took advantage of the pause.

"I know on good authority that when he was taken to the Chancellor's private office he threw himself at the feet of the Countess Blasekrampf, screaming, 'Save me! take pity on me!' Pelikanof would never have been guilty of such baseness."

"Tenteléef," muttered Goubaref, "I must make a note of that."

Madame Soukhautchikof made a gesture of ineffable contempt.

"They are both very nice fellows," she said, "but I know a better anecdote about Tenteléef than that. He was, as you know, a horrible tyrant, although he set himself up for an Abolitionist. One day, in Paris, he happened to be in a certain drawing-

room when Mrs. Beecher Stowe came in,—you know, the author of ‘Uncle Tom’s Cabin.’ Extremely vain, Tenteléef begged the master of the house to introduce him to Mrs. Stowe; but she, the moment she heard his name, addressed him thus, ‘How dare you to come into the presence of the author of “Uncle Tom?” Go away this instant!’ And she gave him a box on the ear; at which Tenteléef put on his hat, and sneaked out of the house like a dog with his tail between his legs. What do you think of that?”

“Perhaps that is a little exaggerated,” said Bambaef. “She said to him, ‘Go away!’ That is an unquestionable fact; but she did not give him a box on the ear.”

“She gave him—gave him a slap on the ear; she gave him a slap on the ear!” repeated Madame Soukhautchikof convulsively. “I am not in the habit of telling

falsehoods. Oh! those people are friends of yours?"

"Pardon me, Matrena Semenovna, I have never said that I was intimate with Tenteléef; it was Pelikanof I spoke of."

"If Tentiléef is not one of your friends, Mikhneef is, I declare."

"And what has he done?" added Bambaef, with some anxiety.

"What has he done! Just as though you did not know! Why he shouted that all the Liberals ought to be put in prison; and when an old schoolfellow, who was very poor, you must understand, went and said to him, 'May I come to dine with you to-day?' he answered, 'No, you can't; I have two counts to dine with me to-day, take yourself off!'"

"But, excuse me, that is a slander," exclaimed Bambaef.

"Slander! slander! In the first place,

Prince Vakhrouchine, who has also dined with your Mikhneef——”

“The Prince Vakhrouchine,” interrupted Goubaref sternly, “is my first-cousin, but I never let him come to my house. Say no more about him.”

“In the second place,” continued Mme. Soukhautchikof, humbly inclining her head towards Goubaref, “Prascovia Takolevna told me of it himself’

“Then you got it from a quarter that can be depended upon! She and Sarkisof are the most prolific newsmongers I know.”

“Excuse me, Sarkisof is a story-teller, it is true; he even stole the pall from his father’s coffin, I am not going to dispute that; but what a difference between him and Prascovia Jakovlevna! Do you not recollect how nobly she separated herself from her husband? But I know you are always ready to——”

“Let us leave off, Matrena Semenovna; let us leave these recriminations, and talk about something more worthy of attention. You know that with me the sacred fire is always burning. Have you read ‘Mademoiselle de la Quintinie?’ What a delightful book, and it expresses your principles!”

“I no longer read novels,” responded Madame Soukhautchikof dryly.

“Why not?”

“Because I have no time for novels; I have at present only one thing in my head—sewing-machines.”

“What machines?” inquired Litvinof.

“For sewing—for sewing. All women ought to provide themselves with sewing-machines and form an association; in that way they would gain their bread and become independent. Otherwise they will never be able to emancipate themselves.

It is a serious—a very serious, social question. We have discussed the subject with Boleslas Stadnitzki. He has an admirable disposition, that Stadnitzki, but he regards things much too lightly. He is quite a child, at the bottom.”

“There will come a time when all will have to give an account of their conduct,” said Goubaref slowly, in a tone half authoritative, half prophetic.

“Yes, yes,” repeated Bambaef; “they will have to give an account. Well, Stephen Nicolaevitch,” he added, lowering his voice, “is the work progressing?”

“I am collecting materials,” responded Goubaref, contracting his brows; and turning towards Litvinof, who began to feel sick of this omelet of unknown names and this rage for scandal, he inquired, “In what way are you occupying yourself?”

Litvinof satisfied him.

“Oh! that is to say natural science. M'm—m'm—. It is very useful as a study, but not as an object. The object ought to be quite different now. Permit me to inquire what are your opinions?”

“My opinions?”

“Yes; that is to say, what are your political convictions?”

Litvinof smiled. “In reality, I have no political convictions.”

At that response, the stout gentleman sitting in his corner suddenly raised his head and looked fixedly at Litvinof.

“How does that happen?” said Goubaref, assuming a pleasant tone. “Have you never thought over the subject, or are you already sickened of it?”

“What shall I say? It appears to me that for us Russians it is still too soon to form political convictions or to imagine that we have formed them. Observe, that I give

to the word *political* the value which rightly belongs to it, and which——”

“Ah! ah! you are one of those who think we are not ripe yet,” said Goubaref in the same pleasant tone; and approaching Vorochilof, he inquired if he had read the pamphlet which he had lent him.

To the surprise of Litvinof, Vorochilof had not allowed a word to escape him since his entrance; he had only frowned now and then, as he sent his eyes round the room with an air of dignity. In general, he either had all the talking to himself or remained silent. At the question of Goubaref, he drew back his shoulders in military style, advanced a step, and made an affirmative sign with his head.

“Well, did you like it?”

“Yes, with regard to the principles upon

which it is based; but I do not subscribe to the consequences which are drawn from them."

"Andrew Ivanovitch spoke to me very highly of that pamphlet. You must explain to me more fully in what you differ from it."

"Do you wish me to do so in writing?"

This question evidently surprised Goubaref; he had not expected it. Nevertheless, after having reflected for a moment, he replied:—

"Yes, in writing; and, while you are about it, I beg you will let me have your ideas upon—upon—the associations."

"Do you wish me to do it after the style of Lassale or that of Schultze-Delitch?"

"M'm—after both. Here, you understand, for us Russians it is the financial side which is the most important. We must

compare all that, and deepen it. With regard to the portion devoted to the peasants——”

“What is your opinion, Stephen Nicolaevitch, about the amount of liberty that ought to be given them?” inquired Vorochilof in a tone of respect.

“M’m—Oh! the people?” said Goubaref with increased gravity, as he chewed the ends of his beard and fixed his eyes upon the foot of the table; “the people—Ah! you understand: that is a grand word! Then, what signify these incendiaries—these measures of the Government against Sunday-schools, the—the reading-rooms, the newspapers? And the refusal of the peasants to sign the Acts which terminate their connection with their former lords? And again, what is happening in Poland? Do you not see where all this is tending? Do you not see—m’m—that we must

mingle with the people and learn their opinions?"

A sort of agitation had suddenly taken possession of Goubaref, his face was inflamed, and his breath came in short puffs from his chest; but he none the less kept his eyes fixed upon the ground, as he nibbled the ends of his beard. "Do you not see——"

"Evséef is a scoundrel!" exclaimed abruptly Madame Soukhautchikof, to whom Bambaef, out of consideration for the master of the house, was relating something in a whisper. Goubaref turned short round upon his heels, and recommenced pacing to and fro the room.

Fresh guests arrived, and as the evening advanced the drawing-room became quite full. Among the new comers was M. Evséef, who had been so rudely designated a short time before by Madame Soukhautchikof.

She conversed with him very cordially, and requested him to conduct her home ; and a certain Pichtchalkin, a very ideal of a peace-maker, one of those men whom Russia probably needs ; without any great capacity, but well-informed, conscientious, patient, and just ; the people of his neighbourhood praised him to the skies, and he was moreover full of respect for his own person.

There were there besides, some officers who had profited by a short furlough to take a trip over Europe, and amuse themselves among educated people, without, however, forgetting for a single instant their colonels and their own chances of advancement ; and two students from Heidelberg, one of whom regarded everything with disdain, and the other laughed convulsively on the smallest provocation ; neither of these two appearing to be at their ease. After them glided in a Frenchman, a wretched-looking

p'tit jeune homme, who boasted to his comrades—commercial travellers—of having attracted the attention of a large number of Russian countesses ; but, in reality, what he looked most after was a supper gratis.

At last appeared a gentleman named Titus Bindassof, in appearance a jolly dog, in reality a disagreeable fellow, a terrorist in words, a sneak by nature, an admirer of Russian shop-girls and Parisian lorettes, although he had scarcely a tooth in his mouth, or a dozen hairs upon his head : he came in half tipsy, with a face as red as a full moon, and the front of his shirt unfastened, declaring that he had left his last penny with that “rogue of a Benazet,” while in fact he had won sixteen florins. In a word, there was a crowd. It was really curious to see the respect with which they all moved round Goubaref ; they submitted to him their doubts, imploring him to settle

them, and he answered by a kind of grunt, a turn of the eye, or by words without sense or connection, which were eagerly caught and treasured as expressions of the highest wisdom. He rarely took part in the discussions; but the visitors, on the other hand, were not silent for a moment.

It frequently happened that four or five of the guests would be explaining, uttering exclamations, and gesticulating in company for ten minutes together, but all understood perfectly and were quite delighted. The conversation was kept up till nearly midnight, and was principally distinguished by the abundance and variety of its subjects. Madame Soukhautchicof talked of Garibaldi; of a certain Charles Ivanovitch, who had been horsewhipped by his own people; of Napoleon III.; of female labour; of Pleskachev the merchant, who, as everybody knew, had caused twelve of his work-

men to die of hunger, and was decorated for that humane deed with a medal bearing the inscription, "For services rendered to his country;" of the Prince Tchinktcheoulidze, who fired at his wife; and of the future of Russia. Pichtchalkin also spoke of the future of Russia, of the production of brandy, of the signification of nationalities, and of his horror of platitude. All at once Vorochilof was seized with a fit, and could no longer contain himself, and in one breath, at the risk of strangling himself, he named Dreper, Firchou, M. Chelgounof, Bichat, Helmholtz, Staz, Stur, Reiminth, John Muller the physiologist, John Muller the historian (whom he evidently confounded), Taine, Renan, M. Chtchapof, and, in company with these, Thomas Nash, Peel Green.

"Who do you mean to say these fellows were?" muttered Bambaef, perfectly aghast.

“They were the predecessors of Shakspeare; they belong to him as the Alps to Mont Blanc,” responded Vorochilof in a sonorous voice; and he too passed on to the future of Russia.

Bambaef also thought it his duty to touch upon that subject, and painted that future in rainbow colours. Russian music especially excited his enthusiasm; he saw in it something truly “grand,” and in order to prove it he commenced a song by Varlamof, but was immediately interrupted by a general remark that it was the *Miserere* from the *Trovatore*, which he was singing abominably. Under cover of the uproar, a little officer railed against Russian literature, while another recited some verses from the *Etincelle*. Titus Bindasof was even more bold; he pooh-pooh’d everything, and declared that all those rascals ought to have their teeth knocked out, without

however attempting to determine who those rascals were. The smoke of cigars became intense, the company were nearly smothered; every voice was hoarse, every eye heavy, and every face streamed with perspiration. Bottle after bottle of iced beer was brought in, and disappeared before you could look round. "Where was I?" said one. "Who was I conversing with?" inquired another. "What were we talking about?" In the midst of this uproar, Goubaref still walked to and fro, twisting his head, sometimes pausing for a moment to listen when anyone addressed him, sometimes uttering a few words as he passed. Everybody felt that he was not only master of the house, but was also the principal personage.

At ten o'clock Litvinof was seized with a violent headache, and made his escape unperceived, under cover of a fresh explosion of cries of indignation. Madame Soukhaut-

chikof had just recollected a new injustice of Prince Barnaoulouf: it had actually been on the point of having somebody's ear cut off.

The night breeze blew agreeably against the inflamed cheeks of Litvinof and refreshed his parched lips. "What was the meaning of all that clamour?" he thought, as he strolled along a shaded walk; "what kind of place have I been to? Why were they all shouting? why were they insulting each other? What could it all come to?" He made an impatient gesture, and hastened towards the Weber Café, where he took up a paper and ordered a glass of wine. The paper was devoted entirely to the Italian question, and the wine was detestable. He was just thinking of going home, when a stranger in a broad-brimmed hat approached, and expressing a hope in Russian that he was not disturbing him, took a seat at

the same table. On examining him with attention, Litvinof recognized in him the gentleman who had sat forgotten in a corner of the room at Goubaref's, and who had cast so penetrating a glance towards him when the conversation turned upon political opinions. During the whole of the evening this gentleman had not opened his lips; now, having taken off his hat and seated himself by the side of Litvinof, he regarded him with a look of kindness mingled with timidity.

CHAPTER V.

“M. GOUBAREF, at whose house I to-day had the pleasure of seeing you,” he commenced, “did not introduce me; if you will allow me, I will do so myself. My name is Potoughine, and I am a retired *conseiller de cour*; I served in St. Petersburg, in the financial department. I hope you will not think it strange in me—I am not generally in the habit of addressing people thus—but with you——”

Here Potoughine stopped short, and ordered the waiter to bring him a glass of kirsch-wasser. “To keep the courage up,” he added, with a smile.

Litvinof examined the person who thus

addressed him with increased attention, and at once said to himself, "This man is not like the others."

He was in fact very different. He was a man with broad shoulders and a large body upon short legs, a rough head of hair, very intelligent but exceedingly melancholy eyes, shaded by thick eyebrows, a regularly-formed mouth, containing a set of ugly teeth, and one of those thoroughly Russian noses which are vulgarly termed potato-noses. He appeared somewhat clumsy and unrefined; but he was evidently no ordinary man. He was dressed in the most untidy manner; a large frock-coat enveloped him like a sack, and his scarf was all on one side. Far from taking this sudden confidence in bad part, Litvinof was secretly flattered by it. It could easily be seen, that this man was not in the habit of thrusting himself thus upon people with whom he

was not acquainted. The impression which he made upon Litvinof was singular: he inspired him at once with esteem, with sympathy, and a certain involuntary compassion.

"Then I am not disturbing you?" he repeated in a rather hoarse and weak voice, which was quite in character with his appearance.

"No, indeed," replied Litvinof; "I am, on the contrary, very pleased——"

"Really? Well; so am I. I have heard you spoken of a great deal; I know your occupations and your intentions, and I approve of them. I was not surprised that you remained silent this evening."

"I fancy that you did not talk much either," returned Litvinof.

Potoughine sighed.

"Others talked only too much; I listened. Well," he added after a short silence, elevat-

ing his eyebrows in a comical manner, "what did you think of the confusion of tongues at our Tower of Babel?"

"Confusion of tongues! That is admirably put. I felt a constant desire to ask those people what they were giving themselves so much trouble about."

Potoughine sighed again.

"The oddest part of the affair is, that they have not an idea themselves. Formerly they would have been called the blind instruments of a superior power; but at the present day, we use more forcible epithets. And you must bear in mind that I have no reason to accuse them; I will say more, they are all—at least nearly all—excellent people. About Madame Soukhauchikof, for instance, I have heard from certain sources things which do her honour. She gave her last shilling to two poor nieces. Even supposing that she was in-

fluenced by the desire of making a show, it must be confessed that the action was nevertheless a praiseworthy one in a woman who was so poor herself. There is not a word to be said against M. Pichtchalkin; in the course of time, the people of his district will certainly make him a present of a silver cup in the shape of a water-melon, and perhaps an image of his patron; and although he may tell them that he has not merited such an honour, he will have fairly earned it. Your friend, M. Bambaef, has a heart of gold: it is true that, like the poet Tazikof—who, it is said, sang the praises of wine and indolence without ever leaving his studies or tasting anything stronger than water—his enthusiasm has no determined object, but he is enthusiastic none the less. M. Vorochilof is also a very nice fellow; like all the men of his school, men of the ‘list of honour,’ he treats

science and civilization as though they were his aides-de-camp; he is a phraseologist even in his silence, but he is still so young! All these men are perfect; but when all has been said there is nothing to be made out of it; the provisions are of the first quality, and yet you cannot swallow a mouthful from the whole of the table."

Litvinof listened to Potoughine with constantly increasing attention. His manner of speaking without precipitation and with confidence, revealed in him a man who possessed the art as well as the taste for conversation. He liked to talk, and he knew how to talk; but, like a man in whom vanity has been destroyed by experience, he waited with philosophic patience for an opportunity which suited him for that purpose.

"Yes, yes," he went on in a tone which

was peculiar to him, without being bitter, "All this is very strange. And here is another thing I should like you to remark. When ten Englishmen, for example, meet together, their conversation immediately turns upon the submarine telegraph, upon taxes, upon the cotton-trade, upon the possibility of tanning mouses' skins, or the like; that is to say, upon something positive and determined. Put ten Germans together, and they will as certainly bring forward Schleswig-Holstein and the unity of Germany. Among ten Frenchmen, whatever efforts they may make to avoid it, you will infallibly hear a discourse upon the 'fair sex.' When ten Russians meet, immediately springs up the question (you have heard enough to-day to convince you upon that point) of the power and the future of Russia, whose origin they would trace back to the eggs of Leda. They squeeze, and

nibble, and suck this unfortunate question as a child does an elastic ball—and with the same result. They cannot touch upon it, understand, without immediately plunging into the rottenness of the West. That same West beats us in almost everything, and yet it is rotten! And again, it would not so much matter if we really despised it; but it is all empty boasting and falsehood. We exclaim against it, and yet we cannot dispense with its approbation: we positively smart under at the ridicule of a Parisian costermonger! I know an excellent man, the father of a family, who was really in despair because, finding himself one day in a restaurant in Paris, he had asked for *a portion of bifteck aux pommes de terre*; while a Frenchman who was sitting by his side said, ‘*Garçon! bifteck pommes!*’ My friend almost fainted with shame. Whenever he wanted a similar repast after that, he always called out

Bifteck pommes! and tried to teach others to express themselves in this manner.

"Can you tell me," inquired Litvinof, "to what the unquestionable influence which Goubaref exercises over all around him is to be attributed? Is it his talents or his social qualities?"

"Neither; he has neither the one nor the other."

"It must be his character, then?"

"He has no character either; but he has a powerful will, and among us slaves that is an article which does not abound. M. Goubaref has taken it into his head to be the chief of a party, and he has become so. What else could be expected? The Government has delivered us from the yoke of serfdom—all thanks be rendered for that—but habits of servitude are rooted too deeply within us for us to rid ourselves of them very rapidly. Everywhere and in

everything we require a master. In most cases that master is a being like ourselves ; but sometimes it is only a certain tendency, as, for instance, the present mania for the natural sciences. Why is this ? What motive urges us thus voluntarily to subject ourselves ? It is a mystery ; such, it appears, is our nature. The important point is that we have a master of some kind, and he is never in fault. We are true serfs. In our pride we are as servile as in our humility. Let a new master come, then down with the old one. Yesterday it was James, to-day it is Thomas. We have nothing but cuffs for James, while we take off our hats before Thomas. Can you not recollect how many times this has happened ? We pride ourselves upon knowing how to deny ; but instead of denying like free men, combating with the sword, we act like lackeys, knowing only how to deal

blows with the fist, and only giving as many of those as the master will permit. Moreover, we are an effeminate people: it is not difficult to lead us. That is why M. Goubaref has climbed so high up the ladder. He has always struck the same nail on the head, and has at last succeeded in driving it home. Here is a man who has a high opinion of himself, who has confidence in himself, and he dictates and commands—that is the thing essential. We at once say, ‘He must be right, and we will listen to him.’ That is the secret of it all. The first who takes the baton in hand has a right to it.”

The cheeks of Potoughine had gradually grown red, and his brows had contracted; however, harsh as were his words, they were dictated by no resentment, but rather by real and sincere sadness, occasioned by the state of things he described.

“How did you make the acquaintance of Goubaref?” inquired Litvinof.

“I have known him for a long time. And here you see another of our eccentricities. There is a writer who has spent his life in vehement denunciations, both in verse and in prose, of drunkenness, and in condemning the production of brandy: one fine day he buys two distilleries, and sets up some five or six dozen of taverns. Another would be swept from the face of the earth, but he has not even received a rebuke. That is the way with M. Goubaref: he is a friend of serfdom, a democrat, a socialist—what you like; and his own property was managed, indeed is still managed, by his brother, one of those gentlemen of the old school who are nicknamed ‘dentists.’ And that same Madame Soukhautchikof, who felt such pleasure in asserting that Mrs. Beecher Stowe had boxed the ears of Tenteléef,

actually crawls before Goubaref, whose only merit consists in making it believed that he reads learned books, and searches to the bottom of everything. You have had an opportunity of judging this evening whether he has any talent for conversation. I think it fortunate that he confines himself, as a rule, to muttering as you heard him to-day; for, when he is in good humour, he tells a number of stories as stupid as they are cynical; so that, however much patience I may have, I can hardly contain myself while I listen; and the great Goubaref relates these tales with a miserable chuckle, as though he believes them to be perfect models of wit."

"I suppose you would say that you have a large stock of patience!" said Litvinof, with a smile. "I should have thought otherwise;—but permit me to inquire your Christian name."

Potoughine took a sip of kirsch-wasser.

“My name is Sozouthe Ivanovitch. They gave me that pretty name in memory of an archmandrite, a relation of mine, to whom I am indebted for nothing but the name, however. I am, if I may so express myself, of a sacerdotal race. As to my patience, you are wrong to doubt that; I have served twenty-two years under my uncle, Trinarche Potoughine, the present counsellor of state. Perhaps you know him?”

“No.”

“I congratulate you. No, I have patience enough. But to return to our first point, as my respectable friend archpriest Avvakoum used to say—the same who was burnt under the Czar Theodore. I cannot help thinking of our countrymen, sir. Look at the slavophiles to whom Monsieur Goubaref says he is united: they are all excellent men, and yet there is always the same mixture of despair and presumption, and they

seem to live only for one word, the 'future.' All will come in time, they say, but in reality nothing comes; and for ten long centuries Russia has invented nothing in the domain of politics, in that of the arts, in science, nor even in commerce. But we must still wait, have patience, and all will come in good time. And why must all come now more than in past years? I should like to be informed upon that point. Because we, the inhabitants of a civilized land, are only puppets! But then we are a great people. Look at that *armiak*,* it is from that everything is to come. All the other idols are destroyed; let us put faith in the *armiak*. But if the *armiak* should not respond to our hopes? It will respond, be assured of it; read Madame Kokhanofski and raise your eyes to heaven! Indeed, if I were a painter,

* The outer garment of the country people.

here is a picture that I would paint: an educated man kneeling with clasped hands before a peasant, and saying to him, 'Cure me, my good man, I am dying of disease;' and the peasant in his turn humbly bowing to the educated man, and whining, 'Enlighten me, good sir, I am perishing for want of knowledge.' And neither of them, you understand, making an effort to gain what they require. Now what we ought to do is, to humiliate ourselves and resign ourselves in reality, and not in words merely; we ought frankly to appropriate what our elder brethren have invented for us. *Kellner, noch ein glässchen Kirsch!* Do not suppose that I am an intemperate man; but alcohol loosens my tongue."

"After what you have said," said Litvinof, with a smile, "I need not ask what party you belong to, or what is your opinion of Europe."

Potoughine raised his head :—

“I admire Europe, I am extremely attached to it, and I do not think there is any reason why I should conceal that. I have long since—no, only a short time since, have I ceased to fear giving expression to my opinions; moreover, I noticed that you did not hesitate to tell M. Goubaref in what light you regard things. Thank goodness, I have ceased to concur in all the opinions of those with whom I converse. In fact, I know nothing worse than useless cowardice—that contemptible complaisance which nobody but a statesman would adopt, and which makes him play the crouching dog to every ass he meets, and whom he thoroughly despises in his heart. He may use such subterfuges from a desire for popularity, but we poor mortals need not have recourse to such tricks. Yes, I believe in the West; I am attached to Europe, or, to

“speak more precisely, I am devoted to civilization, to that civilization which is at the present time so much disparaged among us. I love it with all my heart, I have faith in it, and I shall never have any other love, nor any other faith. That word ci-vi-li-za-tion is comprehensive, all powerful, and sacred, while all the others—nationality, glory, and the like—bear upon them the stain of blood.”

“And Russia, your native land, Sozouthe Ivanovitch, are you fond of it?”

“I love it passionately—and hate it.”

Litvinof shrugged his shoulders.

“An old story, a commonplace expression, Sozouthe Ivanovitch.”

“Well, none the worse for that; there is nothing to alarm you there. A commonplace! I could mention a number of excellent commonplace expressions. ‘Order and Liberty,’ there is an immortal common-

place. Would you prefer it to be, as with us, 'Hierarchy and Disorder?' And besides, are not all those phrases which so much captivate young minds, 'the contemptible aristocracy,' 'the sovereignty of the people,' 'the rights of labour,' just as much commonplaces? As for love being inseparable from hatred——"

"Byronism," exclaimed Litvinof, "the romance of 1830!"

"You mistake; the first who pointed out this mixture of contingents was Catullus, the Roman poet Catullus, who flourished two thousand years ago.* I have borrowed from him, for I know a little Latin, in consequence, if I may so express it, of my clerical origin. Yes, I worship and I detest our Russia—my strange, grand, abominable, dear native land. I have just aban-

* Odi et amo. Quare id faciam, fortasse requiris.

Nescio: Sed fieri sentio et excrucior.—CATULL., lxxxvi.

doned it; it is necessary for one to take a little recreation after sitting in an office for twelve years. I have left Russia, and I find myself very comfortable here; but I feel that I shall soon want to go back. The land of gardens is very well, but it is not the soil for wild briars to take root in and prosper."

"You are comfortable here, and so am I," said Litvinof. "I came here to study, but that does not prevent me from observing some very sad things." While speaking thus, he pointed towards two lorettes, around whom several members of the Jockey Club were laughing and talking, and the gaming-room, which was still crowded, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour.

"Do you suppose that I am blind to these things?" replied Potoughine hastily. "You must excuse me for saying so, but your observation reminds me of the triumphant

-tirades of our unfortunate journals, during the Crimean war, upon the bad management of the English army, which the 'Times' censured so much. I am not an optimist; all my life this comedy, with a tragic end, has appeared to me a dark stain; but why hold the West alone responsible for that which is perhaps a universal weakness? This gambling-house is very disgusting, it is true, but are our sharpers and our infamous black-legs any better than those you find here? No, my dear Gregory Mikhailovitch, be more charitable and less severe: a good pupil may perceive the faults of his master, but he maintains a respectful silence, because those very faults are useful to him, and contain a fund of salutary instruction. If you want to rail at the rottenness of the West, you should go to Prince Coco, who is going along there in such a hurry. He has probably been squandering upon the green

cloth in a quarter of an hour the hard-earned rents of a hundred and fifty families; his nerves are excited now; and, besides, I saw him this morning looking over a pamphlet by Veuillot. He is a splendid talker!"

"Excuse me," said Litvinof hastily, on seeing Potoughine rise. "I know very little of Prince Coco, and certainly prefer your conversation."

"I am very much obliged," replied Potoughine, with a bow; "but I have been conversing with you a long time, or rather I have been talking all by myself, and perhaps you may have remarked that one feels ashamed of one's eloquence, when one has been talking for a considerable time without receiving any reply. So that must do for the first time. Good night. I repeat that I am delighted to have made your acquaintance."

"But wait one moment, Sozouthe Ivanovitch; tell me where you live, and how long you intend to stay here."

That question appeared to embarrass him.

"I shall stop at Baden for a week at least; we shall see each other here at Weber's or Marx's — and I can also call upon you."

"In any case, I should like to have your address."

"Yes; but you see—I am not alone."

"You are married?"

"What an idea! How can you talk in that unreflecting manner? No; but I have a young person with me."

"Oh!" said Litvinof, in a tone of excuse.

"She is only six years of age," added Potoughine. "She is an orphan—the daughter of a lady—of an intimate acquaintance. It will be better for us to meet here. Good night."

He placed his hat upon his rough head, and strode away rapidly in the direction of the Allé de Lichtenthal.

"A strange fellow!" thought Litvinof, as he returned to his hotel; "I must see him again."

He entered his room, and found a letter lying upon the table. "That is from Tania," he said to himself, with a look of pleasure; but the letter came from the country, from his father. Litvinof broke the large seal stamped with a coat-of-arms, and had disposed himself to read, when he was struck by an agreeable perfume which pervaded the room, and which seemed very familiar. He turned his head, and saw a glass in the window containing a bouquet of heliotropes. Litvinof examined it not without surprise, touched it, and smelt it. It vaguely recalled something to his mind, something very distant and forgotten; but what was

it? He could not determine. He rang for the servant, and asked where the flowers came from. The man replied that they had been left by a lady, who had refused to give her name, and had merely said that *Herr Zluitenhof* would guess who she was by the flowers. Litvinof seemed to remember something more. He questioned the domestic upon the appearance of the lady, and was informed that she was tall, elegantly dressed, and wore a veil.

"She must be a Russian countess," added the man.

"Why do you suppose that?"

"She gave me two florins."

Litvinof sent him away, and remained for a long time before the window reflecting; but at length he made a gesture of impatience and took up his father's letter. His parent had crammed it with his usual complaints: he assured him that wheat

would not sell at any price; that the work-people would no longer obey his orders; and that, to all appearance, the world was coming to an end. "Only fancy," he said among other things, "they bewitched my coachman. He would certainly have died if some good people had not advised me to send him to Rezan, to a priest who is well known for his remedies against evil charms. The cure was quite successful; in fact, it could not have been better; in proof of which I enclose a letter I received from the priest himself."

Litvinof ran over this document with some curiosity. It ran thus: "Nicanor Dmitrief has been struck down with a malady which medicine is powerless to cure; some wicked persons have surreptitiously inoculated him, and Nicanor has himself confessed the cause: he had failed to fulfil a promise which he had made to

a young girl; the latter employed certain people to incapacitate him; and, if I had not come to his aid in the matter, he must infallibly have perished like a worm. But confident in the eye of Him who sees everything, I offered to guarantee his life. How was this done? That is a mystery. I trust your honour will endeavour to prevent that young girl from meddling with such things in future; it would be well to threaten her, or she may be led to do some further injury to the said Nicanor."

Litvinof set himself to think over this document, which reminded him of the solitude of the steppes, and the dull and gloomy existence which people lead there; and it seemed very pleasant to be reading that letter at Baden. However, twelve o'clock had struck some time, so Litvinof at length got into bed and put out the light; but he could not sleep; the faces

he had seen during the day, and the discussions to which he had listened whirled through his burning and oppressed brain. Sometimes the grunts of Goubaref sounded in his ears, and he thought he could see his eyes always fixed upon the ground; suddenly those eyes grew bright and glittering, and he recognized Madame Soukhautchikof, and heard her shrill voice repeating, "She gave him a box, she gave him a box!" Then it was the remarkable face of Potoughine presented itself before him, and he recalled for the tenth and the twentieth time every word he had spoken. Suddenly Vorochilof sprang up, like a jack-in-the-box, enveloped in his paletot as in a uniform; further off stood Pichtchalkin, gravely shaking his well-formed and well-brushed head; behind him Bambaef was vociferating and in tears; and above all that perfume of flowers, impossible to drive away, sweet, intoxicating,

which left him no rest, but seemed to increase with the darkness, and remind him more and more of that something which he could not remember. Presently it struck him that the perfume of flowers was unhealthy in a bedroom; he got up, felt about in the dark till he found the bouquet, and placed it in the adjoining chamber; but even then the oppressive odour came to his nostrils through the sheets, in which he had wrapped his head, and he could only turn restlessly from side to side, without the possibility of going to sleep. He began to feel in a fever; twice already the priest, "well known for his remedies against evil charms," had barred his passage in the form of a hare with long ears and a short tail; and, perched upon an enormous general's plume, as upon a tree, Vorochilof, transformed into a nightingale, was beginning to sing; when, springing up in bed and

striking his hands together, he cried, "Can it be *she*? It is not possible!"

But in order to explain that exclamation of Litvinof, we shall be obliged to ask the reader to go back with us some years.

CHAPTER VI.

IN 1850 there lived in Moscow, in a position bordering upon poverty, the numerous family of the Princes Osinine. They were not Tartars nor Georgians, but true Russian princes, descended from Rurik in a direct and legitimate male line. Their name is frequently met with in our annals, at the time of the earliest great princes of Moscow. They possessed extensive domains, having more than once received lands in recompense for their valour, and they sat at the counsel of *boyards*;^{*} but, wickedly accused of witchcraft, they fell into disgrace ;

^{*} Russian noblemen.

they were ruined without mercy, stripped of their dignities, and exiled; and the house of Osinine once broken up, nothing could restore it to its ancient lustre.

In course of time the sequestration upon the landed property was removed, and the personal property at Moscow was restored, but impoverished and withered. The family vainly struggled to regain a position under Peter I. and Catherine II.; constantly declining, and already numbering among their members secretaries, excise officers, and superintendents of police.

The branch with which we have to do was composed of the husband, the wife, and five children. They lived not far from the Place des Chiens, in a small wooden house of one story, with a flight of steps upon the street painted in two colours, with green lions over the door, and other insignia of gentility; but it was with considerable difficulty that

they made both ends meet, even by obtaining long credit with the grocer, and often passing the winter without fire or candle.

The prince was of a feeble and shallow character. Formerly, in his young days, he had been considered a dandy, an exquisite; but now he was completely broken down. Less out of consideration for his name than from regard for his wife, an ex-maid of honour, he had been endowed with a sinecure; he never interfered in anything, but passed his time in a dressing-gown, smoking and sighing over the departed glory of his house. The princess was a woman of weak health and peevish disposition, and was exclusively occupied by the details of the household, the placing of her children in the establishments of the State, and the preservation of her Petersburg connections; she had never been able to resign herself to her position and her separation from the court.

The father of Litvinof had made the acquaintance of the Osinines while he lived at Moscow. He had even once done them a service, by lending them 300 roubles; and his son, being a student at the university, often visited them. He lodged near to their house. It was not, however, this neighbourhood which attracted him, still less was it the comforts which he found, that made him a constant visitor. He had begun to frequent the society of the Osinines from the time that he had begun to feel a lively interest in their eldest daughter, Irene.

She was seventeen years of age, and had just left the seminary, from which she had been withdrawn by her mother in consequence of a disagreement with the directress. Irene was to have repeated before the curator, at a public meeting, a complimentary address in French verse, but at the

last moment the preference had been given to another young lady, the daughter of a wealthy brandy distiller. The princess could not brook this insult, and Irene herself never pardoned the partiality of the directress. She had for a long time been thinking to herself how she would rise, with all eyes fixed upon her, and recite the address, and how all Moscow would be talking about her. Moscow was, in fact, to know something more of Irene. She was tall and well grown, although her bust was less rounded than might have been wished, and surmounted by narrow shoulders; she had a carnation tint upon her cheeks, rare at her age, and a complexion clear and smooth as porcelain; and her hair was fair and thick, although some of the locks were a shade darker than the others. Beautifully regular, her features had not yet entirely lost that expression of candour

which is inherent in early youth ; but in the careless inclination of her graceful neck, and in her smile, half languishing, half absent, a nervous nature could be divined. In those thin lips, too generally compressed, and in that well-proportioned, small, aquiline nose, there was something resolute and passionate, something dangerous both for herself and others. Really fascinating were her grey eyes, shot with a greenish shade, long and veiled like those of an Egyptian divinity, and overhung with long lashes, and haughty but finely marked brows. The expression of those eyes was exceedingly strange ; they seemed to be looking far away, with an attentive and melancholy gaze. At the Institution, Irene had been considered a most intelligent pupil, but she had a capricious and obstinate disposition, and was called a headstrong young lady. One of her mistresses had predicted that

her passions would destroy her; on the other hand, another had reproached her for her icy coldness, and treated her as a "heartless girl." Irene's companions thought her haughty and reserved, her brothers and sisters were afraid of her, her mother placed no confidence in her, and her father did not feel at his ease when she fixed her mysterious eyes upon him; but she nevertheless inspired both her father and her mother with an involuntary sentiment of esteem, not founded upon her abilities, but upon some vague hope which she had caused to grow up within them.

"You will see, Prascovie Danilovna," said the old prince one day, taking his pipe from his lips for a moment; "Irinka will help us out of the gutter."

The princess looked angry, and replied that her husband made use of "intolerable expressions;" then she fell into a

reverie, muttering, "Yes, it would be a very good thing if we could get out of our gutter."

Irene enjoyed in the house a freedom almost without limits; she certainly ran no risk of being spoiled with too much attention, indeed she was rather avoided than otherwise, but no one ever thought of crossing her will; and that was all she desired. When some scene more humiliating than usual took place (when a tradesman came to declare that he was tired of calling for the money that they owed him, and that everybody joined with him in crying shame upon it) Irene did not even frown, or move from her chair, but a strange smile passed over her gloomy face, and that smile was more bitter to her parents than the harshest reproach; they felt themselves guilty, helplessly guilty, towards that graceful being, who seemed

to have had a right from her birth to riches, luxury, and homage.

Litvinof was smitten with Irene immediately he saw her. He was only three years older than she was; but for a long time he could not succeed in gaining her sympathy, nor even in attracting her attention. One would even have thought that he had given her some offence, and that she always retained the memory of that offence, which she could not pardon. He was then too young and bashful to understand what may be concealed beneath that irritation and that disdainful coldness.

~~Often forgetting his books and his lessons,~~ he sat in the dilapidated drawing-room at the Osinines', casting stolen glances towards Irene, with a bitter weight, which became heavier and harder to bear every day, pressing upon his heart; and she would get up with a look of anger and cross the room,

casting a cold glance upon him as she passed, as she might upon a chair or a table, and, making an impatient gesture, fold her arms and stand looking out at window; or perhaps, during the whole of the evening, she would not look at Litvinof once, even when she addressed him; or at other times she would take a book, and keep her eyes fixed upon it for hours, contracting her brows and biting her lips, and then suddenly look up and ask her father or her brother what was the German word for patience. He used every effort to cast off the enchantment by which he found himself surrounded like a bird in a net; and for that purpose he left Moscow for a week. But in that short time he nearly went mad with despair and ennui, and came back to the Osinines', looking pale and ill. By a singular coincidence, Irene had also grown visibly thinner during his absence; her face had

become paler and her cheeks sunken; but she nevertheless received him with increased coldness, taking a malicious joy in treating him with studied indifference, as though he had augmented the mysterious offence of which he had been guilty towards her.

She had tormented him thus for two months, when matters entirely changed: love burst forth like a fire, and carried all before it like a thunderstorm.

One day—he remembered that day long after—he was sitting at a window in the drawing-room at the Osinines', looking vacantly out into the street; a cruel vexation was gnawing at his mind, he despised himself, and yet could not tear himself from that place. If a river had been flowing under the windows, he could have thrown himself into it with horror, but without regret.

Irene had placed herself a short distance from him, and sat without moving or uttering a word. For several days past she had not spoken to him once, and indeed she had scarcely addressed anyone. She sat with her arms crossed, apparently indifferent to all that was going on in the house, and looking distractedly about her, without appearing to notice anything. At length this state of things became insupportable. Litvinof rose, and put on his hat without taking leave. He was passing out at the door, when he was stopped by hearing the voice of Irene.

“Wait,” she said abruptly, in a low voice.

Litvinof shuddered, for he did not recognize that voice at first. Something extraordinary was revealed in that single word. He turned round and stood bewildered. Irene raised her eyes in a strange

manner, and fixed them with a kind expression upon his face.

“Wait a moment,” she repeated; “do not go away. I want to speak to you.” And lowering her voice still more, she added, “Do not go yet; I wish you not.”

Without at all understanding the meaning of these words, or considering what he did, he went towards her, and held out his hand. She gave him both hers, and rose with a smile; then abruptly turned away with a slight blush and left the room. After a few minutes she returned with her youngest sister, and after looking at him fixedly for a second, pointed to a seat beside her. At first she could not speak, but sighed and changed colour; but taking courage after a few moments, she began to question him about his studies, a thing she had never done before.

During the evening she several times begged him to excuse her for having behaved so rudely to him, assuring him that she had become quite another person with regard to him; and surprised him in the course of conversation by republican outbursts of which he had believed her quite incapable (at that time he worshipped Robespierre, and did not dare entirely to condemn Marat); and a week afterwards he knew that he was loved. Yes, he long remembered that first day, but he by no means forgot those which followed, during which, forcing himself to doubt and fearing to believe, he saw this unexpected happiness irresistibly advancing. At such times there are moments of love and delight which cannot be repeated in a single life. Irene had suddenly become as gentle as a lamb, flexible as wax, and of a perfect evenness of temper. She had set herself to give

her younger sisters lessons, not on the piano (she was not a musician), but in French and English; she read with them, and interested herself in the affairs of the house. She occupied herself with everything, and found amusement everywhere; sometimes she chattered like a parrot, sometimes she fell into silent meditation; she formed a thousand plans, and gave herself up to every variety of ideas as to what she would do when she was married to Litvinof, for neither of them had now a doubt that that union would be realized.

“We will study together then,” murmured Litvinof.

“Yes, we will study,” repeated Irene; “we will read,—but above all, we will travel.”

Her principal desire was to quit Moscow, and when Litvinof observed that he had not yet finished his course of education

at the University, she always answered, after reflecting for a moment, that he could complete his studies at Berlin, or some other place.

Irene took no pains to conceal the expression of her feelings, so that her inclination for Litvinof did not long remain a secret from the prince and princess. They were not much delighted by the discovery; but, under the circumstances, they did not deem it necessary to oppose their veto—not, at all events, immediately. Litvinof had a fortune.

“But the family, the family,” observed the princess.

“There is the family to be thought of, to be sure,” returned the prince; “but he is not a low-born fellow, and besides Irene would not listen to us. Have we ever been able to turn her from anything which she had taken into her head? You

know her temper. And, after all, there is nothing settled."

Thus reasoned the prince, but he mentally added, "Plain Madame Litvinof! I expected something better than that for Irene."

Irene had completely carried away the mind of her intended. He, it must be acknowledged, had not offered much opposition; a torrent carried him onward; he was no longer conscious of what he was doing, and he had no regret for the step he was taking, or consideration for the results to which that step was to lead him. What are the duties of marriage? Would it be possible for him to prove a good husband, being so entirely subjected to Irene? What hope of happiness did she offer to him? It was impossible for him to reflect upon such matters for a moment. His blood was at fever heat; he only thought of one thing—to win her, to be with her,

to love her always, and then come what may!

However, notwithstanding the docility of Litvinof, and the exalted affection of Irene, it was not long before some misunderstanding and some coolness rose between them.

One day he came to see her directly from college, in a shabby coat, and with ink upon his hands. She ran to meet him with her habitual eagerness, but stopped short.

"You have no gloves," she said, laying a peculiar stress on each word, and added immediately, "Fie! what a—schoolboy you look! *Vous n'êtes pas distingué.*"

"You are too impressionable," observed Litvinof.

"You are a perfect student," she continued.

And, turning her back to him, she went out of the room. It is true that an hour

after she begged him to forgive her. In general she readily acknowledged her faults; only she accused herself of faults which she did not possess, and obstinately disavowed those which she really had. Another time he found her weeping, with her face in her hands, and her hair unfastened, and when, almost beside himself, he questioned her about her grief, she pointed to her chest. Litvinof trembled.

"She is consumptive," he said to himself, and taking her hand, he inquired in a trembling voice:

"You are ill! I will run for a doctor——"

Irene did not allow him to finish, but stamped her foot with vexation.

"I am very well—but this dress——
Cannot you understand?"

"What is it? the dress—— I don't know——"

"What is it? Why, the matter is that

I have no other, that it is old and ugly, and that I am obliged to wear the same dress every day; even when you—let whoever may come—you will grow tired of me at last, seeing me such a fright!”

“Pray, Irene, what are you saying? That dress is very neat, and it is all the more precious to me because it is the one you wore the first time I saw you.”

Irene changed colour.

“Do not remind me, I beg, Gregory Mikhailovitch, that even then I had but one dress.”

“But I assure you, Irene Pavlovna, that it becomes you beautifully.”

“No, it is frightful! hateful!” she repeated, nervously pulling her long glossy locks. Oh! what poverty! what obscurity! How shall I escape from this wretched poverty and this daily humiliation?”

Litvinof was at a loss what to say; he

moved away a little and regarded her in silence.

Suddenly Irene sprang from her chair, and placing her hands upon his shoulders, said, as she put her face, still wet with tears, close to his, and her eyes sparkling with happiness—

“But you love me, you love me, don’t you? even in this abominable dress?”

Litvinof threw himself upon his knees.

“Ah!” she murmured, “love me, my friend, my saviour!”

Days and weeks passed thus; and although there was no explicit explanation, although Litvinof put off his question time after time, waiting for an order from Irene, she having one day observed that they were both ridiculously young, and that it would be better to add a few weeks to their age; yet matters were gradually drawing to a climax, and the future seemed

becoming more and more certain, when an event occurred which dissipated all these plans, as the wind scatters the dust upon the highway.

CHAPTER VII.

THE court came to Moscow that winter. There was a long succession of fêtes, which terminated with the annual grand ball of the nobility. The news of this ball reached the small house in the Place des Chiens, through an advertisement in the 'Police Gazette.' The prince was the first to discover it; he immediately decided that he ought to go and take Irene; that it would be unpardonable to let an opportunity of seeing their sovereigns escape; and that he had a sort of duty to fulfil for the old

nobility. He insisted upon it with a warmth which was quite unusual in him. The princess accepting his advice to a certain degree, was stopped only by the consideration of the expense; but Irene opposed the project openly.

"It is useless—I shall not go," she answered to all the arguments of her parents. Her obstinacy was so determined that the old prince resolved to ask Litvinof to try to persuade her, and to make her understand, among other reasons, that it was not right for a young lady to cut herself off from society; that she ought to undergo the ordeal, and that people would have lost sight of her so long that they would soon cease to know she was still in existence.

Litvinof undertook to make her acquainted with these reasons. Irene looked at him so fixedly that he was troubled; then,

playing with the ends of her waist-ribbon, she replied quietly—

“Then you desire it?”

“Yes, I think so,” stammered Litvinof. “I am of your father’s opinion. And why should you not go—to see and be seen?” he added with a smile.

“To be seen,” she repeated slowly. “Very well, I will go; only remember it is you who desire it.”

“That is to say, I ——” began Litvinof.

She interrupted him. “You desire it yourself. But there is one condition: promise me that you will not be at the ball.”

“But why?”

“I wish it to be so.”

Litvinof reluctantly gave a sign of consent.

“I submit; but I acknowledge I should have been very much pleased to see you

in all your splendour, and be a witness of the great impression which you will certainly produce. How proud I should have been of you!" he added with a sigh.

Irene smiled.

"All that splendour consists of a white dress; and as for the impression—— At any rate, I wish it; let it be so."

"Irene, are you angry with me?" asked Litvinof.

Irene smiled once more.

"Oh! no, I am not angry, only you——"

She fixed her eyes upon him, and he thought that he had never before seen such an expression in them.

"Perhaps it is necessary," she added in a low voice.

"But, Irene, you love me?"

"I love you," she responded solemnly, as she pressed his hand.

The succeeding days were entirely occupied in preparing the dress and the wreath for the hair. The day before the ball Irene seemed uneasy; she could not rest in one place, and she cried twice in secret. Before Litvinof she had a fixed smile, which never varied; moreover she was as kind to him as usual, but she seemed absent and frequently looked at herself in the glass. On the day of the ball she was silent and pale, but calm.

At nine o'clock, Litvinof came to see her. When she entered the drawing-room dressed in a white tarlatan robe, and a bunch of little blue flowers in her hair, he uttered an exclamation, she looked so beautiful and majestic beyond her age.

"She has grown taller since the morning," he thought; "and how lovely and graceful! It is only necessary to see her to tell that she is of noble blood."

Irene stood with her arms crossed before her, without affectation and without a smile, and her eyes fixed, not upon him, but upon something far off, straight before her.

"You look like a fairy queen," said Litvinof at length; "or rather like a general before the battle—before the victory. You do not permit me to go to the ball," he continued, while she still remained motionless and apparently less attentive to what he was saying to her than to some interior voice, "but you will not refuse to accept these flowers from me."

He offered her a bouquet of heliotropes.

She darted a keen glance at Litvinof, raised her hand, and, grasping the flowers which were twined among her hair, said—

"Shall I? Only speak the word, and I will throw these things away, and remain at home."

Litvinof felt his heart leap. Irene had already partly detached the wreath.

"No, no, why should you?" he exclaimed hastily. "I am not selfish, why should I deprive you—when I know that your heart——"

"Then don't come so near to me; you are tumbling my dress," she responded before he could conclude.

Litvinof felt hurt.

"Will you take the bouquet?" he inquired.

"Certainly, it is lovely; and I am very fond of that perfume. Thank you, I will preserve it as a souvenir——"

"Of your first ball and your first triumph."

Irene looked at herself in the mirror, over the shoulder of Litvinof, slightly raising herself upon her toes to do so.

"Am I really so beautiful? Are you not flattering?" she asked.

Litvinof burst into extravagant praises, but Irene was already no longer listening. Raising the bouquet to her face, she was again looking afar off with those mysterious eyes of hers, which seemed to have become larger and deeper; while the ends of her ribbons, raised by a breath of air, were agitated like wings above her shoulders.

The prince appeared in a white tie and a shabby black coat, with the medal of nobility attached to his button-hole by a ribbon of St. Vladimir; and behind him came the princess, in a dyed silk dress of old-fashioned shape, who, with that assiduous attention under which mothers endeavour to conceal their emotion, began to arrange the skirt of her daughter and pull it into all sorts of folds which were quite unnecessary. The wheels of a hackney-coach, drawn by two sorry horses with long hair,

were heard grinding over the frozen snow outside, and a small lackey, half-smothered in a fantastic livery which was much too large for him, came running into the hall to announce in a desperate tone that the "carriage" had come. After having left their blessing with the young people who remained at home, the prince and princess, wrapped in their cloaks, hastened to the door. Irene followed them in silence, scarcely covered by a little shabby cloak, against which she professed to have an implacable hatred. As he conducted her, Litvinof hoped to catch a look from Irene, but she took her seat in the vehicle without deigning to turn her head.

Towards midnight he passed under the windows of the ball-room. The crimson blinds did not prevent the numberless candles from lighting up the whole space in front of the house, which was thronged with

carriages, and in the distance could be heard the joyous chords of the waltzes of Strauss.

The following day at one o'clock, Litvinof called upon the Osinines. He found no one at home but the prince, who at once informed him that Irene had a headache and was in bed, and that she would not be up till the evening; adding besides, that a slight indisposition was not very extraordinary after a first ball.

"It is very natural, you know, in young girls," he continued, in French, to the surprise of Litvinof, who now observed that the prince was not in his dressing-gown as usual, but in a frock-coat.

"And how," continued Osinine, "could she fail to be unwell, after the events of last night?"

"Events!" stammered Litvinof.

"Yes, events—*de vrais évènements*. You cannot imagine, Gregory Mikhailovitch,

quel succès elle a eu ! All the Court was struck by her appearance. The prince Alexander Feodorovitch said that this was not the place for her, and that she reminded him of the Countess of Devonshire, the celebrated Countess, you know. The old Count Blasenkrampf declared aloud that Irene was *la reine du bal*, and expressed a desire to be introduced to her. I was also introduced to him ; at least he told me that he recollected having seen me when I was a hussar, and wanted to know where I was serving now. He is an amusing fellow, that Count, and what an *adrateur du beau sexe !* I assure you he would not even leave the princess herself alone. Nathalie Nikitichna talked to him herself—what more would you have ? Irene danced *avec tous les meilleurs cavaliers* ; they took her from me so often that I could not count. Imagine everybody crowding

round us; in the mazurka the gentlemen all wanted to choose her. A foreign diplomatist, learning that she was a Muscovite, said to the emperor, '*Sire, décidément c'est Moscou qui est le centre de votre empire!*' Another diplomatist added, '*C'est une vraie révolution, Sire;*'—revolution or revelation—or something of that kind. Yes, yes, I assure you it was something extraordinary."

"But," said Litvinof, who felt his hands and feet benumbed during this discourse of the prince, "but did Irene Pavlovna enjoy herself—did she appear to be satisfied?"

"Of course she enjoyed herself; she could not possibly have failed to be satisfied! Besides, you know, she was not at all bashful or nervous. Everybody said to me last night, 'It is really surprising that no one would imagine that your daughter

is at a ball for the first time.' Count Reuzenbach among others—you know him; surely?"

"No, I don't know him at all; I do not think I have ever seen him."

"He is a relation of my wife."

"I don't know him."

"He is very rich, and a chamberlain; he lives in Petersburg, and is a man of fashion. In Livonia he takes the lead in everything. Up to the present time he has not noticed us, but I don't blame him. I am an easy tempered man, as you know. Well, this Count Reuzenbach sat down beside Irene and talked to her for more than a quarter of an hour, and he said to the princess afterwards, 'Cousin, your daughter is a pearl; she is perfection, everybody is congratulating me upon having such a niece.' After that I observed him; he went towards a very high personage, to whom he talked

without taking his eyes off Irene, and presently this personage turned round and looked at her also.

"Then Irene Pavlovna will not be visible to-day?" asked Litvinof once more.

"No; she has a violent headace. She told me to give her respects to you and to thank you for the bouquet, which was admired very much. She wants rest. The princess has been to make some calls, and I also——"

The prince coughed, and evidently found a difficulty in concluding his speech.

Litvinof took up his hat, saying, "that he would not disturb her, but that he would call in the evening to make inquiries," and retired.

When he had got some few yards from the house, he saw a handsome carriage stop before the tower of the boudochnik.* A

* Police officer.

footman in scarlet livery was leaning from the box and inquiring where Prince Paul Vasilievitch Osinine lived. Litvinof looked into the carriage; it was occupied by a man about fifty years of age, with a florid complexion, and a furrowed, but arrogant face; he had a Grecian nose and sarcastic lips, and, as he sat muffled in a fur cloak, had every appearance of a person occupying an elevated position.

CHAPTER VIII.

LITVINOF did not keep his promise of returning in the evening; he fancied it would be better to put off the visit. On entering, about midday on the day following, the drawing-room which he knew so well, he found there only the two little girls, Victorine and Cleopatra. After kissing them both, he asked if Irene Pavlovna was better, and if he could see her.

"Irinochka has gone out with mamma," answered Victorine, who was the boldest of the two.

"What! she has gone out?" repeated

Litvinof, and he felt something rising in his throat. "Is this—is this not the hour she usually occupies herself with you, the time she gives you your lessons?"

"Irinochka is not going to give us any more lessons," replied Victorine.

"No, she is not going to give us any more," repeated Cleopatra after her.

"And is your father at home?" asked Litvinof.

"Papa is not at home, and Irinochka is ill; she cried nearly all night."

"She cried?"

"Yes, she cried. Egorovna told me so; and her eyes were so red and swollen."

Litvinof took two or three strides up and down the room, quaking as though he was cold, and then returned home. He experienced a sensation similar to that which a man feels looking down from a high tower

He felt a giddiness, a vague astonishment, a crowding upon his mind of disagreeable thoughts, a confused dread, a mute expectation, a curiosity—a strange curiosity, almost painful,—and a sensation in his throat, as though the tears were trying to rise to his eyes, but could not find the way. A vacant smile played round his lips, and stupid, meaningless supplications, which were addressed to nobody, came to his lips. He felt cruelly humiliated. “Irene will not see me,” he repeated again and again to himself, “that is evident; but what can be the reason? What could have happened at that fatal ball! How could she have thus changed so suddenly?” (Men daily see death come unawares, but can never accustom themselves to its suddenness.) “To refuse to say anything to me, not even to give me an explanation——”

“Gregory Mikhailovitch!” called a voice in his ear.

Litvinof gave a start; his servant was standing before him with a letter in his hand. He at once recognized the handwriting of Irene. Before he opened it he foresaw some misfortune, and he bowed his head and raised his shoulders, as though to prepare for the shock. At length he gathered courage, and tore open the envelope, which contained a tiny sheet of note-paper with these words—

“Pardon me, Gregory Mikhailovitch. All is over between us; I am going to Petersburg. I am overwhelmed with sorrow, but the thing is decided. No doubt such was my destiny. But I do not attempt to justify myself. My presentiments are realized. Forgive me, and forget me. I am not worthy of you.—IRENE.

“Be generous; do not seek to see me again.”

Litvinof read these lines, and sank down upon the divan, as though an invisible hand had struck him. He allowed the note to fall, took it up and read it again, and murmured, "To Petersburg!" and then again let it fall from his hand. A strange calm had come over him: he slowly raised his hands to arrange the cushions behind his head. "The man who is mortally wounded has no feeling," he thought; "as it came, so it has gone—it is quite natural; I expected it." He did not speak the truth; he had never foreseen anything of the kind. "She cried! What did she cry for? She did not love me! But it is all simple; it is quite in accordance with her character. She is not worthy of me! Well, let it be so." He smiled bitterly.

"She was ignorant of her value; after having been made aware of it at the ball,

how could she think again of a poor student ?
I comprehend it all."

But here he thought of her affectionate words, her smiles, her eyes,—those eyes which he could never forget, which he should never see more, but which glistened and expanded as they encountered his ; he thought again of the single furtive kiss which he had received from her lips, and he burst into convulsive sobs, while his limbs shook as though he had the ague. He turned round, half suffocated, and struck his head with fierce pleasure, as though he would have destroyed himself as well as all that surrounded him ; then he buried his inflamed visage in the cushions of the divan, and bit them.

The gentleman whom Litvinof had seen in the carriage on the previous day, was no other than the relation of the Osinines

—the man of wealth, the chamberlain Count Reuzenbach. Struck with the sensation which Irene had produced in high places, and seizing at a glance the advantages that might be made out of it, the count, like a man of energy, who was well acquainted with the court, set up his batteries without loss of time. He determined to act rapidly, *à la Napoléon*. “I will take that singular young girl with me,” he thought; “and I will make her my heiress, in spite of the devil himself—of a portion my property at least. I have no children; she is my niece; and the countess sometimes complains of being left alone. It is always pleasant to have a pretty face in the drawing-room. Yes, yes, that shall be it: ‘*Es ist eine Idee, es ist eine Idee!*’ I must dazzle and fascinate the parents.” And as he sat in the carriage on his way

to the Place des Chiens, he continued: "They have hardly got bread to eat; there is no danger that they will be obstinate. They are not so sensitive as to refuse. And besides, if it were necessary, I could give them a sum of money. And she—she will consent. Honey is sweet—she had a taste last night. Suppose it is a caprice on my part; they have only to take advantage of it—the fools. I will say to them, 'Decide, or I will take some other, some orphan who will suit me better. Yes or no? I only give twenty-four hours.'"

It was with these arguments that the count presented himself to the prince, who had been informed of this visit on the previous evening. It would be useless to enlarge upon the result. The count was not deceived in his calculations; the prince and princess made no objection, but took

a sum of money, and Irene gave her consent before the twenty-four hours were up.

It had been no easy matter for her to break off with Litvinof, whom she really loved; she felt the rupture acutely, especially after she had dispatched her note to him, and she shed a great many tears. Nevertheless, a month later, the princess took her to Petersburg, and left her at the house of the count, in the hands of the countess, an excellent woman, but who had no more strength or spirit than a chicken.

Litvinof then left the university, and went home to his father in the country. Gradually his wound healed. At first he received no news of Irene, as he avoided speaking of Petersburg and its society. However, it was not long before rumours reached him, rumours which were less un-

pleasant than strange. Irene had acquired a reputation ; surrounded by persons of rank, and marked with a particular stamp, her name was spreading wider and wider, and had even reached provincial circles. It was pronounced with curiosity, with envy, even with respect, as the name of the Countess Vorotinski had formerly been pronounced. At last came the news of her marriage, but Litvinof paid scarcely any attention to it ; he was already engaged to Tatiana.

The reader will now comprehend all that rushed into the memory of Litvinof when he exclaimed, " Is it possible ! " We shall therefore return to Baden, and take up the interrupted thread of our story.

CHAPTER IX.

It was late before Litvinof fell into a sleep, which lasted scarcely an hour. He rose with the sun. The dark outline of the mountains, which could be seen from his window, stood out against an azure sky. "How fresh and pleasant it must be under those trees!" he thought. He dressed himself hastily, cast an absent glance upon the bouquet, which looked even more gay and blooming than it had done the night before, took up his walking-stick, and set out towards the Old Château.

Caressed by the fresh and gentle breezes of the morning, he breathed with ease, walking along at a brisk pace, with a glad feeling of youth and health flowing through his veins, and the ground itself seemed to rebound under his feet. Every step rendered him more alert and joyous. He walked in the shade, upon the firm gravel of a narrow path, bordered with sombre fir-trees, through the foliage of which the sun's rays stole here and there in golden streams.

"This is delightful!" he murmured to himself at times.

All at once he heard voices which were known to him, and saw Vorochilof advancing in company with Bambaef. At the sight of them he stopped short; and, like a schoolboy avoiding his master, sprang on one side, and concealed himself behind a bush.

“My star, deliver me from my countrymen!” he could not prevent himself from saying.

He would have given anything at that moment to prevent them from seeing him, and, in fact, he was successful in avoiding them. His star delivered him from his countrymen.

Vorochilof was explaining to Bambaef, with the tone of a delighted schoolboy, the different styles of Gothic architecture, and the latter contented himself with grunting approbation. It was evident that Vorochilof had overwhelmed him long since, and that the enthusiast was beginning to be tired of it. For sometimes Litvinof stood listening with outstretched neck, and biting his lips, while the nasal tones of the archaeological discourse sounded in his ears. At length the voice was lost in the distance.

Litvinof breathed again, and leaving his retreat, continued his walk.

He rambled for three hours about the hills. Sometimes he left the road and jumped from rock to rock, or scrambled up the mossy banks; sometimes he seated himself upon a large stone under an oak or a beech, and allowed his thoughts to wander to the incessant babbling of a brook concealed by the fern, the rustling of the leaves, and the sonorous warbling of the blackbird.

An agreeable drowsiness came over him, caressing arms seemed to be furtively folded round him from behind. He involuntarily closed his eyes, and opened them with a start: the green and gold of the woods became indistinct before his sight, and with a smile upon his lips, he sank once more to sleep. When he awoke a few minutes afterwards he wanted his breakfast,

and he mounted the hill to the Old Château, where an excellent cup of coffee could be obtained for a few kreuzers; but he had scarcely settled himself before one of the little white tables which were placed upon the terrace of the Château, when he heard the loud panting of fatigued horses, and saw three carriages standing before the entrance, from which a numerous company of ladies and gentlemen were descending.

Litvinof saw immediately that they were Russians, although they were speaking French, or rather *because* they were speaking French.

The toilets of the ladies were in exquisite taste; the gentlemen had black frock-coats buttoned at the waist—which is not usual in our day,—grey trowsers, and well-brushed silk hats. A black silk scarf ornamented the neck of each of these gallants, whose

every movement had something military about it. They were in fact soldiers.

Litvinof had stumbled upon a picnic of young officers, men of high standing and considerable importance. That importance was visible in everything they did; in their unnatural attitudes; their affable but majestic smiles; their looks, absent and at the same time affected; in their manner of elevating the shoulders, of bending their backs, and of slightly bending the knee; it was visible even in the tones of their voices, which seemed always to address subordinate creatures with a mixture of condescension and disgust. All these warriors were scrupulously washed and shaven, and impregnated with an odour of the boudoir and the officer—a mixture of the best cigars and the most genuine Patchovli. All had aristocratic hands—long, and termi-

nating in nails polished like ivory; waxed moustaches, brilliant teeth, smooth skins, carnation cheeks, and bare chins. Some were gay and some thoughtful; but all bore the same stamp of the most excellent *comme il faut*. Each one seemed to be deeply impressed with a sense of his own value, and with the importance of his future position in the State; for the time, a slight appearance of that petulance and that freedom to which one gives way in a foreign country, agreeably modified the expression of this conviction.

After having settled themselves, not without considerable noise and bustle, the party called the waiters, who found it no easy matter to attend to all their orders.

Litvinof hastened to dispose of his cup of coffee, paid for it, and armed with his staff,

had almost got clear of the company, when he was stopped by a feminine voice.

"Gregory Mikhailovitch, do you not know me?" it said.

He paused involuntarily; that voice had formerly made his heart beat only too much; he turned round and saw Irene. She was sitting at one of the tables, with her hands resting upon the back of a chair, and her face upturned and smiling; she appeared to be examining him with attention, almost with joy.

Litvinof recognized her in a moment, although she had become much changed during the ten years that he had not seen her, and although from a girl she had become a woman. Her fine figure was admirably developed; the outline of her shoulders, formerly too narrow, now recalled those goddesses appearing from the clouds, which

one sees upon the ceilings of ancient Italian palaces; but the eyes remained the same, and it seemed to Litvinof that they still looked as they had done years ago in the little house at Moscow.

"Irene Pavlovna!" he said, with some hesitation.

"You recognize me? How glad I am, how—" She stopped, changed colour slightly, and rose from her seat. "What a pleasant rencontre," she continued in French. "Allow me to introduce you to my husband—Valerien, M. Litvinof, *un ami d'enfance*; Valerien Vladimirovitch Ratmirof, my husband."

One of the young generals, perhaps the most elegantly got up of all, rose and bowed to Litvinof with exquisite politeness, while his companions each individually wrapped himself up, so to say, in his dig-

nity, eager to protest against any approach in a simple *pekin*, and the ladies felt themselves obliged to smile and express surprise.

"Have you been long at Baden?" inquired General Ratmirof, not knowing evidently what to talk about with the former friend of his wife.

"Not very long," responded Litvinof.

"And do you intend to prolong your visit?" continued the obsequious general.

"I have not quite decided yet."

"Oh! that is very agreeable."

The general remained silent, and Litvinof followed his example, both holding their hats in their hands and staring foolishly at each other.

"*Deux gendarmes, un beau dimanche,*" struck up a short-sighted general, of course out of tune—hitherto, it has never been

our lot to meet a Russian gentleman who did not sing out of tune—struck up, I say, a short-sighted general, sallow, and with a perpetual expression of irritation upon his face, as though he could never pardon his physiognomy. He was the only one who did not look like a rose.

“But why do you not sit down, Gregory Mikhailovitch?” said Irene at length.

Litvinof resigned himself.

“I say, Valerien, give me some fire,” said, in English, another officer, equally young, but very stout, with immovable eyes, which he kept fixed upon vacancy, and bushy carefully-brushed whiskers, which he slowly caressed with a hand as white as snow.

“*Avez-vous des papiros?*” called out one of the ladies.

“*De vrais papelitoes, comtesse.*”

“*Deux gendarmes, un beau dimanche,*”

continued the short-sighted general, almost grinding his teeth.

“You must positively come and see us,” said Irene to Litvinof in the meantime. “We are stopping at the Hotel de l’Europe. I am always at home from four to six. It is such a long time since we saw each other.”

Litvinof looked Irene in the face; she did not cast down her eyes.

“Yes, Irene Pavlovna, it is a long time since you were at Moscow.”

“Since I was at Moscow—since I was at Moscow,” she repeated, after a pause.

“Come, let us talk, but not of old times. Do you know, Gregory Mikhailovitch, you have not much changed.”

“Really! But Irene Pavlona, you have changed!”

“I look older.”

“I did not mean to say that!”

"Irene!" said in an insinuating tone a lady with an amber bonnet upon sandy hair, turning round from a gentleman with whom she had been whispering and laughing, "Irene!"

"I have grown older," continued Irene, without answering the lady, "but I have not changed. No, no; I have changed in nothing."

"*Deux gendarmes, un beau dimanche,*" hummed once more the irascible general, who only remembered the first line of the song.

"That tickles me still, your Excellency," said the stout general with whiskers, in a loud voice, probably making allusion to some amusing story known to the company; and bursting into a slow chuckling laugh, he again fixed his eyes upon the air. The rest of the party joined with him in his hilarity.

"What a sad dog you are, Boris!" observed Ratmirof, in a low voice. He pro-

nounced the words in English, even to the name of Boris.

"Irene!" called for the third time the lady in the amber bonnet.

Irene turned abruptly towards her.

"*Eh bien, quoi? que me voulez-vous?*"

"*Je vous le dirai plus tard,*" replied the lady in an affected tone. Although she was anything but good-looking, she gave herself the most absurd airs.

Irene frowned, and turned away impatiently.

"*Mais que fait donc Monsieur Verdier? Pourquoi ne vient-il pas?*" exclaimed a lady, in that drawling tone so shocking to French ears, which characterizes the Russian mode of speaking.

"Ah yes, ah yes, M'sieu Verdier, M'sieu Verdier," whined another lady, a recent importation from Armazas.

“*Tranquillisez-vous, mesdames,*” replied Ratmirof; “*Monsieur Verdier m’a promis de venir se mettre à vos pieds.*”

“Ha! ha! ha!” laughed the lady, as she toyed with her fan.

The waiter brought some glasses of beer.

“*Bairish Bier?*” demanded the general with bushy whiskers, feigning surprise; “*Guten Morgen.*”

“Ah! it just strikes me, Count Paul is still there?” inquired one young officer of another, in a listless tone.

“He is still there,” replied his companion, in the same manner, “but it is only temporarily; it is thought that Serge will take his place.”

“Oh!” said the first.

“Yes,” muttered the second.

“I can’t understand,” commenced the singing general, “what necessity there was

for Count Paul to attempt to justify himself, and to explain his reasons. He pressed the fellow for the money, and made him pay it, what then? He must have had his motives?"

"He was afraid of the critics—the papers," muttered somebody.

The irascible general blazed up suddenly.

"Oh! that is the last thing I should care about. The papers! The critics! If I had to do with it, I would not allow these papers to insert anything but the bread and meat tax, and the advertisements of boots and coats."

"And the announcements of land to be sold by auction," added Ratmirof.

"Yes, well, according to the circumstances. But what a conversation at Baden, *au vieux château*!"

"Not at all, not at all," said the lady

with the amber bonnet. I dote upon politics."

"You are right, madame," remarked another general, with a face almost like that of a girl. "Why should we avoid such questions, even at Baden?" As he uttered these words, he politely turned towards Litvinof with a smile of condescension. "A man of principle ought never, under any circumstances, to sacrifice his opinions. Do you not think so?"

"Certainly," returned the irascible general, also casting his eyes towards Litvinof, but with severity, as though he were addressing an indirect rebuke to him; "however, I don't see the necessity——"

"No, no," interrupted the indulgent general, softly. "Our friend Valerien Vladimirovitch here alluded to the sale of land belonging to the nobility. Well, is it not a fact?"

“But it is impossible to sell now, nobody will buy!” exclaimed the irascible general.

“That may be, that may be. The greater reason for acknowledging the fact—the deplorable fact. We are ruined, that is not to be denied; we are humiliated, that is unquestionable; but we still remain large proprietors—we represent a principle. It is our duty to support that principle. Excuse me, madame, I think you have let your handkerchief fall. When a certain blindness has come over the most elevated minds, the minds of persons occupying the most exalted positions, we ought to point out, with respect, of course,” (here the general extended his hand)—“we ought to point out with the finger of a citizen the abyss towards which we are hurrying. We ought to warn, and cry out with respectful firmness, ‘Stop, retrace your steps.’ That is our duty.”

"However, it is impossible to retrace our steps entirely," observed Ratmirof, with a thoughtful air.

"Entirely, entirely, my dear sir. The farther we go back, the better it will be," replied the indulgent general, with a smile, as he again cast a benevolent look towards Litvinof, who was beginning to lose patience.

"Ought we to go back to the epoch of the boïards, general?" he inquired.

"Well, why not? I express my opinions without reserve; we must retract all—yes, retract all that has been done."

"Even the 19th February?"*

"Even the 19th February, so far as is possible. One is a patriot, or one is not. And liberty? you will ask me. Do you

* It was on the 19th of February that the Emperor Alexander II. decreed the emancipation of the serfs.

think that liberty is so very sweet to the people? Question them——”

“Try to take it from them,” said Litvinof.

“What is the name of this gentleman?” whispered the general to Ratmirof.

“What are you discussing?” asked the stout general abruptly, who evidently occupied the position of a spoiled child among the party. “Still about the papers and the writers? Allow me to relate to you a wonderful story that happened to myself. I was informed that a pamphleteer had written a libel upon me; so I had him brought to me under a strong guard, and when the rascal came into my presence, I said, ‘You take a delight in writing lampoons? You are burning with patriotism?’ ‘I pride myself upon my patriotism,’ he replied. ‘And you are fond of money, my

young pamphleteer?' I asked. 'Yes, I like money.' Here, O gentlemen, I held the knob of my stick under his nose. 'And this, what do you think of it, my angel?' 'No,' said he, 'I don't care for that.' 'Smell it well, I have a strong arm.' 'That will do, I don't like it.' 'Well, my fine fellow, I admire it exceedingly, only not upon my own back. Do you understand that allegory?' 'Yes, I understand,' he said. 'Well, my treasure, pay attention: henceforth behave yourself; now, here is a rouble, go and pray for me day and night.' And the scribbling rogue went away."

The general burst out laughing, in which he was echoed by all the company, except Irene, who did not even smile, but cast a black look at the narrator.

The obliging general shook the shoulder of Boris.

“You have invented all that, my dear fellow,” he said. “You will never make me believe that you could threaten anyone with your stick. In fact, you have not got one. You only wanted to make the ladies laugh; you wished to say something amusing. But that is not the question. I was saying that we ought to go back entirely. Do you understand? I have no objection to what you call progress; but all these universities, these seminaries, these popular schools, these students, these sons of priests and cobblers, all this rubbish, this filth from the bottom of the sack, this small ownership, worse than the *prolétariat*” (the general enumerated all these in a tone of deep disgust), “that is what terrifies me. We must pause and go back. He again cast a friendly regard towards Litvinof. Yes, we must put the drag on. Remember

that nobody among us even asks for these things; nobody claims these so-called rights. *Self-government*, for instance; does anybody ever wish for such a thing? Do *you* wish for it? Is it you, ladies, who not only govern yourselves, but also make us do whatever you wish?" A waggish smile lighted up the face of the general. "My dear ladies, why should we act like the hare who runs into danger in order to avoid it? The democrats are satisfied; they are, for the moment, almost ready to flatter us and enter into our views; but it is a two-edged blade. The old system was better, much more safe. Never let the rabble reason as to right and wrong; trust in the aristocracy, who have all the power. I assure you that would be much better. As to progress, I have really nothing to say against progress. Only don't give us

advocates and judges, and don't interfere with military discipline; beyond that, you are free to build bridges, and docks, and hospitals, and I don't see why the streets should not be lighted with gas."

"They set fire to the four corners of Petersburg, that's what they call progress," exclaimed the irascible general.

"I know you have a spite against it," said the stout general, twisting his body round; "you would make an admirable solicitor-general to the Holy Synod; for my part, with *Orphée aux Enfers*, progress has had its day."

"You are always saying some stupid thing or other," cried the sharp voice of the lady from Arzamas.

"I was never more serious, madame," retorted the general, with emphasis, "than when I say stupid things."

"That is borrowed from M. Verdier," observed Irene in a low voice.

"*De la poigne et des formes?*" exclaimed the stout general, "*de la poigne, especially.*" Which may be translated into Russian thus, Be polite, but crack his skull.

"Oh, you are an incorrigible fellow," said the effeminate general. "Ladies, you must not believe him; he would not kill a fly; he is content with devouring hearts."

"No, Boris," commenced Ratmirof, after having exchanged a glance with his wife; "jesting apart, there is a little exaggeration here. Progress is the manifestation of social life; that is why it should not be lost sight of; it is a symptom that is worth studying."

"Yes," said the stout general, turning up his nose; "it is well known that you aim at being a politician."

“Not at all; what has that to do with politics? But you must acknowledge the truth.”

Boris plunged his fingers into his whiskers again, and stared into vacancy more intently than before.

“Social life is a very serious thing, because in the development of the people, in the destiny, so to say, of the country——”

“Valerien,” interrupted Boris, in a significant tone, “there are ladies present. I did not expect that from you. Would you turn this into a political meeting?”

“They are all done away with for good, thank God!” observed the irascible general, hastily; and he began to sing: “*Deux gendarmes, un beau dimanche.*”

Ratmirof put his handkerchief to his face, and left off with a good grace; the amiable general repeated—

“A bad fellow! a bad fellow!”

And Boris, turning towards a lady, without lowering his voice or changing the expression of his face, began to ask “when she was going to crown his happiness?” as he was desperately smitten with her, and was suffering inconceivable martyrdom.

During this conversation, Litvinof felt more and more uneasy. His feelings, as well as his honour and his plebeian pride, were wounded. What was there in common between him, the son of an ordinary functionary, and these aristocratic soldiers from Petersburg? He loved all that they hated, he hated all that they loved; he understood that only too clearly, and felt it with all the force of his being. He thought their jokes dull, their tone insupportable, and their manners sophisticated.

Even in their most friendly words there was something contemptuous and insulting. And yet he felt bashful before them—before these men, before these enemies.

“How ridiculous!” he said to himself. “I must embarrass them, and appear absurd; what am I stopping here for? I will go.”

The presence of Irene could not have kept him certainly; for she only caused him painful impressions. He rose and began to take his leave.

“You are going already?” said Irene; but after reflecting for a moment, she did not insist upon his remaining; she merely made him promise to call and see her. General Ratmirof returned his bow with that politeness which distinguished him, shook hands with him, and even conducted him to the end of the terrace; but Lit-

vinof had hardly turned the corner of the path, when he heard roars of laughter. This laughter was not caused at his expense; it was provoked by the sudden appearance of the long-expected M. Verdier, mounted upon a donkey, wearing a Tyrolese hat, and wrapped in a loose blue coat. But Litvinof believed himself to be the cause of this gaiety; and the blood mounted to his cheeks, and he compressed his lips, as though he had swallowed gall.

“What contemptible people!” he murmured, without reflecting that the few minutes which he had spent in their company did not give him the right to express himself so severely.

And it was among such people as these that Irene had fallen! She lived and reigned among them! It was for that position that

she had sacrificed her dignity, and cast aside the best feelings of her heart! But apparently it was better it was so; she did not deserve a better fate! How glad he felt that Irene had not taken it into her head to question him respecting his private business and his plans in life. He would have been obliged to explain in the presence of those people.

“Not for the world—never!” he exclaimed, as he drew in the fresh air of the mountains.

And he returned to Baden almost at a running race. He thought of his sweetheart, his good and gentle Tatiana, and she appeared to him more pure, candid, and noble than ever. With what ineffable joy he recalled her features, her words, her slightest habits! With what impatience did he await her arrival!

A rapid walk calmed his nerves. When he got into his room, he sat down to a table and opened a book ; then he allowed it to fall and began to think. What had happened to him ? Nothing—but Irene—Irene ; that meeting seemed to him so surprising, so strange, so incredible. Was it possible ? He had seen her again, he had spoken to that same Irene, who——. And why was it that she seemed free from those hateful manners which distinguished all the others ? Why did she seem bored and scarcely able to support her situation ? She was in their camp, but she was not an enemy. And what had induced her to address him with such a good grace, and to invite him to her house ?

Litvinof raised his head.

“ Oh ! Tatiana,” he exclaimed excitedly, “ you alone are my angel, my good genius ;

I love only you, and will love you for ever.
I will not go to see her. God bless her!
let her enjoy herself in her own way with
her generals!" And he took up the book
again.

CHAPTER X.

LITVINOF took up the book again, but it was impossible to read. He went out, walked a little, listened to the music, and watched the play, then returned home, and seated himself to his book with no better result. The time seemed unusually long.

At length a gentleman called, Picht-chalkin, the justice of the peace, who stopped three hours. He talked, argued, put questions, touching alternately upon subjects the most elevated and the most practical, and finally produced such a tedium that

Litvinof was upon the point of shouting with despair.

For causing ennui, icy, hopeless, without issue or remedy, Pichtchalkin had no equal, even among profound moralists known to possess that talent in an eminent degree. Only to look at his mouth, skull, his clear and expressionless eyes, and his nose, so melancholy in its regularity, gave you a fit of the spleen; and his barytone voice, slow, sleepy, and doleful, seemed to have been created expressly to pronounce with weight and precision such sentences as these: Two and two make four, and not five or three; water is wet; charity is praiseworthy; credit is indispensable in financial transactions, to the State, as well as to individuals. And notwithstanding this, he was the best of men. But such is the destiny of Russia—the best among us are bores.

Pichtchalkin retired; he was replaced by Bindasof, who, with perfect assurance, asked him for the loan of a hundred florins. This Litvinof lent him, although so far from feeling any interest in Bindasof, he felt a repugnance for him, and was quite certain of never again seeing the money, which he required himself. Why then did he lend it, the reader will ask? Perhaps he may find a reply to that question in his own life. Has not every one of us some time or other acted in the same way?

Bindasof did not even give himself the trouble to thank Litvinof, but sent for a large glass of Affenthaler (a red wine of the country), and then took his leave. What vexation Litvinof felt as he watched the great red neck of the insolent fellow disappear!

In the evening he received a letter from

Tatiana, which informed him that in consequence of an indisposition of her aunt, she should not arrive at Baden for five or six days. That letter caused him great disappointment and increased his annoyance; and he went to bed early, in anything but an amiable disposition.

The next day, almost from dawn, his chamber was filled with countrymen: Bambaef, Vorochilof, Pichtchalkin, two officers, and two students from Heidelberg, came in a body, and did not leave till towards the dinner hour, although they had soon emptied their budgets of news, and evidently felt the time hang heavily upon their hands.

They literally did not know what to do with themselves. They commenced by talking of Goubaref, who had returned to Heidelberg, and whom they thought they ought to follow. Then they did a little

philosophy, touching upon the Polish question; after that came roulette and some highly-spiced anecdotes; and at last the conversation turned upon men remarkable for their strength, their size, and their voracity.

The oldest stories were brought forward. They cited the deacon who had made a bet that he would swallow thirty-three herrings, and the soldier who had broken a bullock's sinew upon his forehead; each striving to outdo the other. Pichtchalkin himself said, with a yawn, that he had known a peasant in the Ukraine, who weighed on the day of his death more than thirty-five stone, and a landowner who eat three geese and a sturgeon for his breakfast.

Bambaef did not lose an opportunity of falling into ecstasies; he declared that he was capable of disposing of a whole sheep

himself, provided the sauce was good; and Vorochilof advanced something so monstrous that all the rest were literally beaten, and after looking in each others' faces, they caught up their hats and disappeared.

Left alone, Litvinof tried to occupy himself, but his head seemed as though it was full of vapours; he could do nothing, and again wasted the evening. The following morning he was sitting down to breakfast, when there was a knock at the door. "Good heavens! here is one of my friends of yesterday again!" thought Litvinof; and it was not without some agitation that he said, "Herein!" The door opened softly, and Potoughine entered the room. Litvinof turned towards him with a look of pleasure.

"Now, this is kind!" he said, eagerly

pressing the hand of the unexpected visitor. "I should certainly have come to see you, if you had told me where you lived. Sit down, my dear sir—give me your hat; there, take a seat."

Potoughine did not respond to these friendly words, but remained standing in the middle of the room, smiling and shaking his head. The cordial welcome of Litvinof had evidently touched him, but there was some embarrassment in the expression of his countenance.

"Pardon me," he stammered. "I assure you I feel great pleasure—but I was asked to call upon you."

"You mean to say," said Litvinof, in a tone of reproach, "that you would not have come without?"

"Oh, no; but—perhaps I should not have decided to disturb you to-day if I had

not been requested to come to you. In a word, I have a message for you."

"May I know from whom?"

"From a person you know—from Irene Pavlovna Ratmirof. You promised, some three days ago, to call and see her, and you have not done so."

Litvinof looked with surprise at Potoughine.

"You are acquainted with Madame Ratmirof?"

"As you see."

"And you know her—intimately?"

"I am a friend of hers to a certain extent."

Litvinof remained silent.

"Allow me to ask," he continued, "whether you know why Irene Pavlovna desires to see me?"

Potoughine went towards the window.

"I know to a certain point," he replied. "So far as I can judge, she is very glad to have met you, and wishes to renew former relations."

"Renew!" repeated Litvinof. "Excuse my indiscretion, but allow me to put one more question. Are you aware of the nature of those relations?"

"I am really ignorant respecting them; but I presume," added Potoughine, suddenly turning towards Litvinof with an affectionate expression, "I presume that they were excellent ones, for Irene Pavlovna was very high in her praise of you, and I was obliged to give her my word that I would take you back with me. Will you come?"

"When?"

"Now, at once."

Litvinof allowed his hand to fall upon his knee.

"Irene Pavlovna," pursued Potoughine, "supposes that the—how shall I express it?—that the society in which you saw her the other day could not have been to your taste, but she desires me to say that the devil is not so black as he is painted."

"Humph!—that comparison is peculiarly applicable to that society."

"Yes, in general."

"Ah!—but what is your own opinion about the devil, Sozouthe Ivanovitch?"

"I think, Gregory Mikhailovitch, that he is not, in all cases, just as he is painted."

"Is he better?"

"Better or worse, it is difficult to decide; but he is not exactly what he is said to be. Well, will you come?"

"Sit down and rest yourself a few minutes. I acknowledge that it still appears to me rather strange——"

“May I be so bold as to ask what it is that appears so strange?”

“How did you happen to become the friend of Irene Pavlovna?”

Potoughine returned modestly—

“With my appearance and my position in the world, it is indeed incredible; but, you know, Shakspeare has said, ‘There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy.’ Let us take a metaphor: here is a tree; there is not a breath of wind; it is impossible for the leaves upon the lower branches to touch those upon the upper ones; but the storm comes, all are blown here and there, and the leaves are intermingled.”

“Oh! then, there have been storms?”

“I should think so! As though we could exist without them! But, to set philosophy on one side, it is time to go.”

Litvinof still hesitated.

“Good heavens!” exclaimed Potoughine, with a comical grimace, “what is come to the young men of the present day! A charming woman sends a messenger for them, and they make all sorts of objections! Here is your hat, and *vorwärts!* as our fiery friends the Germans say.”

Litvinof still remained for a moment in uncertainty, but it ended by taking his hat and going out with Potoughine.

CHAPTER XI.

THEY hastened towards one of the most comfortable hotels in Baden, and inquired for General Ratmirof. The porter first took their names, and replied that *die Frau Fürstin ist zu Hause*; he preceded them upstairs, rapped at the door, and announced them. *Die Frau Fürstin* received them immediately; she was alone, her husband having gone to Carlsruhe to have an interview with an influential Russian personage, who was passing through that town.

Irene was sitting at a little table, working

upon canvas, when Potoughine and Litvinof entered the apartment. She hastily laid aside her work, pushed away the table, and rose, while an expression of satisfaction was painted upon her face. She wore a morning dress; the outlines of her arms and shoulders were visible through the thin stuff, and her hair, negligently arranged, fell halfway down her neck. She cast a glance towards Potoughine, and murmured, "Thanks;" and holding out her hand to Litvinof, she smilingly reproached him for forgetting an old friend.

Litvinof attempted to excuse himself.

"*C'est bien, c'est bien,*" she hastened to say, and after having made him put down his hat, gave him a seat. Potoughine also sat down, but under the pretence of urgent business retired almost immediately, promising to call again in the evening after

dinner. Irene again cast a rapid look towards him and made him a friendly sign of the head, but did not attempt to retain him, and the moment he had passed the door she turned eagerly to Litvinof.

"Gregory Mikhailovitch," she said in Russian, with a sweet and silvery tone, "we are now alone; I must tell you that I am very glad of our meeting, because it—gives me an opportunity of asking your pardon."

As she spoke thus, she looked him straight in the eyes.

Litvinof felt his lips quiver involuntarily. He had not expected so abrupt an attack; he had not foreseen that she would so resolutely lead the conversation back to the past.

"Pardon—for what?" he said, stammeringly.

Irene changed colour.

“For what? You know very well,” she answered, half turning away. “I have been very guilty towards you, Gregory Mikhailovitch, although, no doubt,—it was my destiny” (Litvinof recollected her letter); “I do not repent—at any rate it is too late now; but having met you so unexpectedly, I thought to myself that we must positively become friends again—positively—and it would grieve me very much if it were otherwise; and that is why I fancy we ought to have an explanation, once for all, in order that in future there may not be between us any — embarrassment. You must assure me that you forgive me, or else I shall suppose that you retain unkind thoughts of me. That is what I wanted to say to you. It is probably conceit on my part, for no doubt you have long since for-

gotten all; but never mind, tell me that you have pardoned me."

Irene pronounced this address without taking breath, and Litvinof observed that tears, real tears, glistened in her eyes.

"Pray, Irene Pavlovna," he responded earnestly, "why attempt to excuse yourself? why ask for pardon? The past has vanished like water upon the sand, and I can only feel astonished that in the midst of the brilliant society by which you are surrounded, you could have preserved a recollection of the obscure companion of the morning of your youth."

"That surprises you?" said Irene, in a low voice.

"It touches me," replied Litvinof, "because I could not have imagined——"

"You have not yet told me that you forgive me," interrupted Irene.

"I sincerely rejoice at your good fortune, Irene Pavlovna; I wish you every possible happiness."

"And you no longer think evil of me?"

"I think only of the happy moments which you procured for me."

Irene held out both her hands to him. Litvinof pressed them, and did not let them go immediately. That touch filled his heart with an agitation long since forgotten. Irene again looked in his face, but this time with a smile; and now, for the first time, she had the courage to observe him with attention. He recognized those features which had been so dear to him; those intelligent eyes, with their beautiful fringe and their mysterious expression; the manner in which the hair grew upon her forehead; her manner of curling her lips when she smiled with a comic and charming movement. But

how she had improved! What charm, what grace in that young feminine form! And neither rouge, nor powder, nor any paint upon her pure and fresh countenance! Ah yes! she was very lovely!

Litvinof began to think; he still looked at her, but his thoughts were far away.

Irene observed him.

"Come, that is very kind of you," she said, again taking up the conversation; "my conscience is now at rest, and I can satisfy my curiosity."

"Your curiosity?" repeated Litvinof, not quite understanding her.

"Yes, I want to know what you have been doing, and what are your plans; I want to know all,—how, when, everything, in fact. And you must tell me the truth, for I warn you that I have not lost sight of you—more than I was obliged."

“You have not lost sight of me, you? there—at Petersburg?”

“In the midst of the brilliant society which surrounded me, as you express it. Exactly. We will talk of that lustre some other time; but now you must relate to me the many things which have happened in this long time; nobody will interrupt us. That will be delightful,” she added, settling herself gaily in a fauteuil. “Come, begin.”

“Before telling you anything, I must thank you,” said Litvinof.

“For what?”

“For the bouquet which I found in my room.”

“What bouquet? I don’t know anything about it.”

“What?”

“I repeat, I know nothing about it;

but go on with your story. Oh! how kind Potoughine was to bring you."

Litvinof opened his ears.

"Have you known this M. Potoughine long?" he inquired.

"Yes, for a long while; but go on."

"And you are intimately acquainted with him?"

"Oh! yes!" Irene sighed. "There are some peculiar circumstances connected with my knowledge of him. You must surely have heard talk of Eliza Belsky, she who died so tragically two years ago; but I forget that you do not know our histories, and I congratulate you. Oh, how fortunate! at last here is a man, a living being, who does not know what is passing among us! And I can talk to him in Russian, in correct Russian; but nevertheless preferable to that eternal,

insipid, insupportable French jargon which is spoken in Petersburg."

"Potoughine, you say, knew this——"

"It is painful to me to think of that," interrupted Irene. "Eliza was my best friend at school, and afterwards, at Petersburg, we saw each other constantly. She confided all her secrets to me; she was very unhappy, for she had suffered very much. Potoughine conducted himself admirably in the affair, like a true knight. He sacrificed himself; it was not till then that I knew how to appreciate him. But we are a long way from our subject, Gregory Mikhailovitch."

"But my story would not interest you, Irene Pavlovna."

"That is not your business."

"Recollect, Irene Pavlovna, that we have not seen each other for ten years—ten long

years. How much water must have flowed past during that time ! ”

“ Not water only,” she replied with bitterness ; “ that is why I wish to hear.”

“ Besides, I do not know where to begin.”

“ At the commencement. From the day I—the day I left for Petersburg. You then left Moscow. Do you know, since that period I have never seen Moscow.”

“ Indeed ! ”

“ At first it was impossible ; and then, when I was married——”

“ Have you been married long ? ”

“ Four years.”

“ You have no children ? ”

“ No,” she responded, in a dry tone.

Litvinof remained silent for a moment.

“ And until you were married you

always lived with this—what is his name?—with this Count Reuzenbach, your uncle?”

Irene considered him attentively; she seemed to want to find out the motive of that question. Then he was ignorant of all?

“No,” she replied at length.

“So your parents—I have not inquired about them—they are——”

“They are in good health.”

“They still live in Moscow?”

“As formerly.”

“And your brothers and sisters?”

“They are quite well; I have settled them all.”

“Oh!” Litvinof looked at Irene obliquely. “Indeed, Irene Pavlovna, it is not I, it is you who have much to tell me, if only——”

“ He did not know how to finish the sentence. Irene, holding up her hand, began to turn her wedding-ring.

“ I will not refuse,” she said at length. “ I will tell you some day. But it is your turn first ; because, you see, although I have followed you at a distance, I do not know very much about you, after all ; while you must certainly have heard enough said about me. Is that not true ? Do not conceal it from me.”

“ You occupy too elevated a position in the world to be sheltered from comments, Irene Pavlovna ; especially in the country where all sorts of rumours are believed.”

“ But have you given credit to them ? Of what nature were those rumours ?”

“ I must confess that they reached me only very rarely. I lived almost in solitude.”

"However, you went as a volunteer to the Crimea?"

"You know that?"

"You see I do. I have told you that I watched your movements."

Litvinof felt disconcerted.

"Why, then," he asked, in a low voice, "should I undertake to relate that which you know already?"

"To satisfy my desire, Gregory Mikhailovitch."

Litvinof inclined his head, and began to relate, somewhat confusedly and hastily, his adventures, which really had nothing remarkable or interesting in them. He frequently paused, and looked at Irene with a glance which entreated her to spare him; but she implacably exacted the fulfilment of her wish, and leaning upon the arm of her fauteuil, with her hair thrown back

behind her ears, she seemed to be seizing every word with increasing attention. However, if some one had been following the play of her countenance, he would easily have discovered that she was not listening at all to what Litvinof was saying, but that she was plunged in deep meditation. And Litvinof was not at all the object of that meditation, although he coloured and felt uneasy under her keen regard—a whole existence was rolling back before her, and it was not that of Litvinof, but her own.

Before arriving at the end of his relation, Litvinof broke off, under the impression of a feeling which became more and more painful. This time Irene did not desire him to go on; putting her hand over her eyes, she leaned back in her seat and remained for some moments quite still. Litvinof also remained silent for a short time;

then, finding that his visit had lasted two hours, he rose, and was taking up his hat, when the creaking of patent boots was heard in the adjoining chamber. The next moment Valerien Vladimirovitch Ratmirof appeared, spreading around him the distinguished perfume which never quitted him.

Litvinof exchanged a bow with the amiable general. Irene removed, but without haste, the hand which covered her face, and, looking at her husband, said to him in French—

“Ah! vous voilà déjà revenu! Quelle heure est-il donc?”

“Près de quatre heures, chère amie, et tu n'es pas encore habillée; la princesse nous attendra.” And turning ceremoniously towards Litvinof, he added in the courteous tone which was habitual to him, “It appears

that an amiable guest has made you forget the time."

The reader will allow us to give him here some information respecting General Ratmirof. His father was indirectly descended from a great lord of the time of Alexander I. and a French actress. The lord had thrust his son forward in the world, but had left him without fortune; and that son himself, the father of our hero, had not had time to grow rich; he had become a colonel and a chief of police, when he was overtaken by death. A year before his decease he had married a young and rich widow who had placed herself under his protection. The son of the chief of police and the widow Valerien Ratmirof had been placed, for special protection, in the *corps des pages*, and he soon attracted the attention of his superiors, less by his scientific acquirements

than by his martial bearing and his unalterable submission. He entered the Guards, and passed a brilliant career, thanks to the modest amenity of his disposition, his activity in the ball-room, and the elegant manner in which he rode at parade the horses which were lent to him by his comrades; thanks, moreover, to a singular art of familiar politeness towards his superiors, and an assiduous attention to his duties, with which was mingled a shade of liberalism. This liberalism, however, did not prevent him from having five peasants, whom he had been ordered to bring to reason, whipped to death in White Russia. His exterior was very attractive and singularly juvenile. White and rosy, light and gallant, he had great success in drawing-rooms, where mammas with marriageable daughters doated upon him.

Prudent by habit, silent by calculation, General Ratmirof seemed like the industrious bee which extracts sweets from the most ugly flowers, frequenting the highest society, and without either education or any remarkable intellectual capacity, but with tact, agreeable manners, and, above all, with unshaken resolution to climb as high as possible, he saw no obstacles in his path.

Litvinof put on a forced smile, and Irene shrugged her shoulders.

"Well," said she in a serious tone, "have you seen the count?"

"Of course I have seen him. He desired me to give his respects to you."

"Ah! and is he as stupid as ever, your patron?"

General Ratmirof made no answer; merely bestowing upon this feminine ques-

tion one of those faint smiles which a man of mature years accords to the prattle of a child.

"Yes," added Irene, "your count is really too stupid."

"It was you," observed the general between his teeth, "who wished me to meet him." Then, turning towards Litvinof, he inquired in Russian if he was drinking the Baden waters.

"I am quite well, thank God!" answered Litvinof.

"I am glad to hear it," continued the general, smiling with a gracious air; "people do not generally come to Baden to be cured; however, the waters are very efficacious, and those who suffer as I do from a nervous cough——"

Irene rose hurriedly.

"I shall see you again, Gregory Mikhailo-

vitch, and I hope before long," she said in French, contemptuously interrupting her husband. "I am obliged to go to dress now. That old princess is unbearable with her eternal pleasure-parties, at which one feels nothing but ennui."

"You are very severe upon everybody to-day," muttered her husband, as he went to his room.

Litvinof hastened towards the door, but was stopped by Irene.

"You pretended to tell me all," she said, "but you have concealed the most important thing."

"What is that?"

"They say you are going to be married."

Litvinof reddened up to his ears. He had intentionally avoided speaking of Tatiana; and it was very disagreeable that

Irene should thus have discovered his intentions of marrying as well as his desire to conceal it. He did not know what to say as he stood with the eyes of Irene fixed upon him.

“Yes, I am going to be married,” he said at length ; and he retired immediately.

Ratmirof re-entered the room.

“Are you not going to dress?” he asked.

“You can go alone ; I have a headache.”

“But what will the princess think ?”

Irene measured her husband from head to foot, then turned her back upon him and retired to her room.

CHAPTER XII.

LITVINOF was as discontented with himself as though he had lost at roulette, or had broken a promise. An interior voice whispered to him that it was not right for a man of his age—a man about to be married—to allow himself to be drawn away by the curiosity and the seductions of memory.

“What did I go there for?” he asked himself. “On her part it is only coquetry, whim, caprice. She is sickened with pleasure, and she has taken a fancy to amuse

herself with me, just as a gourmand sometimes takes it into his head to eat black bread. Why did I go? Just as though I could not—could not despise her.”

It was not without an effort that he uttered, even mentally, these last words.

“Of course,” he proceeded, “there is not, and there could not be, any danger; I know whom I have to deal with, but it is better not to play with the fire, and I will never set a foot in her house again.”

Litvinof did not dare, indeed could not, acknowledge to himself how beautiful he thought her, and to what extent she had aroused long buried feelings.

The day seemed terribly long. At dinner, fate placed him by the side of a handsome gentleman with a large moustache, who did not open his lips, and did nothing but breathe hard, and roll his eyes. The

evening brought nothing very consoling. Under the eyes of Litvinof, Bindasof won a sum four times greater than that which he had borrowed, but not only did he not pay the debt, but he even cast a threatening look at him, as though he had a great mind to punish him for having been a witness of his luck.

The following morning a troop of countrymen again invaded his apartments. Directly he had got rid of them he went for a walk up the hill, where the first person he encountered was Irene, whom he pretended not to recognize ; and a few moments afterwards he met Potoughine.

Nothing would have given him greater pleasure than a conversation with the latter, but he could not get a reply from him. Potoughine was leading by the hand a little girl, elegantly dressed, with locks almost

white, large dark eyes, and a pale, sickly face, bearing that expression of command and impatience which characterize spoiled children.

Litvinof passed two hours upon the hill, and returned by the Allé de Lichtenthal. A lady with a blue veil, who was sitting upon one of the seats, rose directly she perceived him, and when he reached the spot he recognized Irene.

"Why did you fly from me, Gregory Mikhailovitch?" she said, with that uneven voice which denotes inward agitation.

Litvinof was perplexed.

"I fly from you, Irene Pavlovna!"

"Yes, you."

Irene appeared very much agitated, almost irritated.

"You mistake, I assure you."

"No, I do not mistake. Just as though

I could not see that you recognized me this morning when you passed me. Tell me, did you not recognize me?"

"Really, Irene Pavlovna——"

"Gregory Mikhailovitch, you are a sincere man, and you have always told the truth; tell me, did you not recognize me? You turned away intentionally?"

Litvinof looked at Irene. Her eyes were sparkling with a strange lustre, and the paleness of her cheeks and lips could be seen through her veil. There was in the expression of her face and the broken tones of her voice something so irresistibly distressing and supplicating, that Litvinof could feign no longer.

"Yes—I did recognize you," he said, with a strong effort.

Irene's lips quivered, and she let her arms fall down by her side.

"Why did you not come to me?" she murmured.

"Why—why!——" Litvinof quitted the walk, and Irene followed him in silence. "Why?" he repeated, as his face suddenly became agitated, and a fit of anger swelled his throat and chest. "You!—you ask me that, after what has passed between us? Not now, of course, but years ago—at Moscow?"

"But we had decided—but you promised—" stammered Irene.

"I have promised nothing!" he exclaimed. "Excuse the warmth of my words, but you demand the truth; judge for yourself. Is it not to a coquetry, which I confess I do not understand, is it not to a desire to regain once more your influence over me, that I am to attribute your—I don't know how to express

it—your ~~persistence~~? We are now so different; I have forgotten all, I have become another man; you are married and happy, at least in appearance; and you enjoy an enviable position in the world. What is the use of our seeking each other's company? We could no longer understand each other; there is no longer anything in common between us, either in the past or the future — especially — especially in your past!”

Litvinof uttered all this in a hurried voice and with jerks, without turning his head. Irene did not stir; only from time to time she made an almost imperceptible movement with her hand, as though entreating him to stop and listen to her, and at the last word she bit her lower lip as though she felt the agony of an arrow having pierced her.

"Gregory Mikhailovitch," she replied, making a strong effort to be calm—and she moved farther from the path, in which one or two persons were promenading. Litvinof followed her. "Gregory Mikhailovitch, believe me; if I had imagined that I retained a shadow of influence over you, I should have been the first to have avoided you. If I have not done so, if I have decided, notwithstanding my—past faults, to renew an acquaintance with you, it is because—because——"

"Because?" repeated Litvinof, almost sternly.

"Because," continued Irene, with sudden energy, "I could not help it. I am already stifled in this society, in this *enviable* position, as you call it; because, meeting a living man in the midst of all these puppets—you had a sample of them the

other day at the Old Château—it seemed to me like a pure spring in the desert. And you call me a coquet, you suspect me, you repulse me, under the pretext that I have been really guilty towards you, and still more guilty towards myself!”

“You have chosen your lot, Irene Pavlovna,” returned Litvinof, in a stern voice, still without turning his eyes towards her.

“I have—I do not complain—I have no right to complain,” proceeded Irene hurriedly, seeming to be relieved even by Litvinof’s severity; “I know that you ought to condemn me. I do not seek to justify myself; I am anxious only to make you understand my feelings, and to convince you that there is no coquetry in me now. Play the coquet with you! Why that would not be common sense! When I saw you, all that was young and good within

me—that time, when I had not chosen my lot, and all that passed in that serene period, before these ten years——”

“But excuse me, Irene Pavlovna; if I do not mistake, the brilliant portion of your existence dates precisely from the period of our separation.”

Irene raised her handkerchief to her lips.

“What you say to me is very hard, Gregory Mikhailovitch, but I cannot be angry with you. Oh! no; it has not been a happy time—it was not for my happiness that I left Moscow. I have not known a moment of happiness, not a single one, believe me, whatever you may have been told. If I were happy, could I talk to you as I do now? I repeat, you do not know what these people are. They comprehend nothing, they feel nothing, they have not

even a mind, only art and address: music, poetry, and the fine arts are equally strange to them. You will tell me that I used to be indifferent to such things myself,—not, however, to the same extent, Gregory Mikhailovitch—not to the same extent. It is not a woman of the world who is before you—a glance would tell you that, if you would only look at me,—it is not a *lionne* (it is so, it appears, that they call us), but a poor creature really deserving compassion. Do not be surprised at my words—my pride is all gone. I hold out my hand to you like a miserable beggar; understand that at last—as a beggar. I implore charity,” she added, with involuntary and irresistible vehemence, “I ask for charity, and you——!”

Her voice failed her. Litvinof raised his head and looked at her: his breath came fast and his lips quivered. He felt his heart

beat wildly, but all the anger he had felt disappeared.

“You say,” pursued Irene, “that our paths are different; I know you are going to marry according to your choice, you have already arranged your plans for life; but we have not become such strangers to each other, Gregory Mikhailovitch, that we cannot understand each other. Do you suppose that I am completely dead to all good feelings, that I am completely bemired in the swamp? Oh! no, pray do not believe that. Let me rest my heart a little, if only for the sake of past days, since you will not forget them. Do not let our meeting be sterile; I ask but little, very little—a little sympathy. I only ask that you will not repulse me, that you will let me repose my mind a little.”

Irene paused; it was evident that she was struggling against her emotion. She sighed

and held out her hand. Litvinof took it slowly, and gave it a slight pressure.

“Let us be friends,” murmured Irene.

“Friends!” repeated Litvinof, in a melancholy voice.

“Yes, friends; and if that is too much to ask, let us be acquaintances, as if nothing had ever happened.”

“As if nothing had happened!” repeated Litvinof. “You said just now that I would not forget those past days, Irene Pavlovna—what if I cannot forget them?”

A smile passed rapidly over the face of Irene, but was immediately replaced by an expression of concern, almost of alarm.

“Do as I do, Gregory Mikhailovitch, think only of what was good in those times. Give me your word—your word of honour——”

“For what?”

“That you will not fly from me, that you will not wound me uselessly. Do you promise me that, tell me?”

“Yes.”

“And you will drive from your mind all bad thoughts?”

“Yes; but I cannot quite understand you.”

“It is unnecessary; besides, if you wait, you will understand me. But you promise me?”

“I have already said yes.”

“Thank you. Mind I am accustomed to believe you. I shall expect you to-day or to-morrow; I shall not go out. Now I must leave you; the duchess is coming along the walk; she sees me, and I must speak to her. Good-bye. Give me your hand; quick, quick, good-bye.”

And having pressed the hand of Litvinof,

Irene hastened towards a middle-aged lady, who, with a majestic air, was marching up the walk with measured steps, followed by two other ladies, and a lackey in scarlet livery.

“*Ah, bon jour, chère madame,*” said the duchess, as Irene respectfully approached her. “*Comment allez-vous aujourd’hui ? Venez un peu avec moi.*”

“*Votre altesse a trop de bonté,*” responded Irene, in an insinuating tone.

CHAPTER XIII.

LITVINOF allowed the duchess to move on with her suite, and then continued his walk. He could not account to himself for the feelings which he experienced; he felt shame and alarm, at the same time that his vanity was flattered. The explanation of Irene had taken him unawares; her ardent and hurried words had fallen upon him like hail. "These women of fashion are strange creatures," he thought; "how sick they grow of the society in which they live, feeling, as they must, its empti-

ness!" In reality he repeated these commonplace expressions, as though to chase away more unpleasant reflections. He felt that he must not at that moment abandon himself to serious reflection, for he would probably be led to find himself guilty; and he walked with slow steps, confining his attention towards the objects which surrounded him.

Suddenly he found himself near a seat, saw a pair of feet, and raised his eyes. The feet belonged to a man who was reading a paper, and that man was Potoughine. Litvinof uttered a slight exclamation. Potoughine laid down the paper upon his knee and looked attentively, without a smile, at Litvinof, who stood looking at him in return.

"Can I find room by the side of you?" he said at length.

“Do me the favour to sit down,” returned Potoughine. “Only I warn you that you must not be angry if you have a lecture: I feel in a most misanthropical disposition; everything about me appears exceedingly dismal.”

“That is nothing, Sozouthe Ivanovitch. Indeed, I resemble you to some extent. But upon what evil weed have you trodden?”

“I have no cause for ill-humour,” replied Potoughine. “On the contrary, I have just been reading in the paper of the project for judicial reform in Russia, and I see with sincere satisfaction that we are at length showing signs of good sense; and that we no longer intend, under the pretext of independence, nationality, or originality, to hang a little fragment upon the pure and evident European logic; but that we are

going to borrow, without reserve, whatever is good in foreign nations. It was something to have made such a concession of this kind as the emancipation. Make what you can out of the present circumstances. Surely, I have no cause for ill-humour; but, unfortunately, I have just come across a *rough diamond*, to whom I talked for a short time; and all these rough diamonds, all these swaggerers, bore me to death."

"Who was this diamond?" asked Litvinof.

"Why, you know him—that stout fellow who is here, and who imagines that he is a musician of genius. 'Of course,' said he, 'I am only a cipher, because I have never studied; but I have, without comparison, more melody and more taste than Meyer-beer.' In the first place, I had a great

mind to have asked him why he had not studied; and in the second place, not to speak of Meyerbeer; the worst flute-player in the humblest German band has more taste than all our so-called rough diamonds; only the flute-player keeps his ideas to himself, and does not think himself bound to pester the land of Mozart and Haydn with them; while our boaster, directly he has composed the poorest waltz or the most insignificant ballad, with a smile of contempt upon his face, and his hands in his pockets, must set himself up for a genius. It is the same with painting and with everything else. Oh! those rough diamonds are too much for me. Is it not time to cast to the dunghill all these boastings and falsehoods?—‘Nobody dies of hunger in Russia;’ we travel faster here than in any other country in the world; we are sufficiently

numerous to bury our enemies with our caps.' I am constantly hearing people talk of the rich Russian nature, of our superior instinct, of Koulibine ! Where is that richness to be found ? I hear only the stammering of men who are just awaking ; I see only an ingenuity more worthy of animals than human beings. Instinct ! That is much to make a parade of ! Take an ant from the wood, carry it a verst from its nest, and it will find its way back again. A man could hardly do as much ; is that to say that the man is inferior to the ant ? Instinct, even in the highest degree, is not that which distinguishes man ; that which does distinguish him is good sense, simple good sense, true sense ; that should be our appanage, that is our true object of pride. As for Koulibine, who, without any knowledge of mechanism, made a very

bad clock, I would have exposed his clock upon a pillory with this inscription, 'Behold, good people, how you ought not to work.' Koulibine may have been a very good fellow, but his work was not worth a straw. You may praise Telinchkine, the builder, for the boldness and skill which he exhibited in repairing the spire of the Admiralty buildings, if you will; but do not exclaim that he made the German architects look foolish, and that they are good for nothing but to receive the money. He gave them no new idea: he merely built up the spire again after it had been thrown down. In the name of goodness, do not spread abroad in Russia a notion that we can do everything without study. No, if you have a forehead a foot high, study, study, till you have mastered the subject; begin at the alphabet, and steadily work your way up;

or, if you are not content to do that, hold your tongue, and be quiet. Pooh! I am warm."

Potoughine took off his hat and fanned himself with his handkerchief.

"The fine arts," he continued, "and the commerce of Russia! I know the bombast of Russia, I also know her impotence, but, God forgive me! I have never met with her fine arts. For twenty years we have been kneeling before Brulof—before that pretentious cipher—and we fancy that he has formed among us a school superior to all others. The fine arts of Russia! ha! ha! ha! ho! ho! "

"Allow me to ask, however, Sozouthe Ivanovitch," observed Litvinof, "do you not even admit the talents of Glinka?"

Potoughine scratched his ear.

"Exceptions, as you know, only prove the

rule. Even in the case you mention, we have not been able to keep ourselves from exaggerated boasting. If we confined ourselves, for instance, to saying that Glinka was really a remarkable musician, but that circumstances and his own faults prevented him from founding a Russian opera, nobody would dispute that; but no, it was impossible to stop there. He must immediately be elevated to the position of commander-in-chief, the prince of the musical profession, under the pretence that other nations have never had his equal. And, as a proof, we cite some coarse genius whose 'sublime productions' are only pitiful imitations of foreign composers of the second order—of the second order, observe; for those are the most easily imitated. Nothing equal! Oh! unfortunate barbarians, who understand perfection in art as though it were a question of

Rappo the mountebank. A foreign Hercules can lift six pounds with one hand, ours can lift twenty ; so you see others have nothing equal. I will take the liberty of mentioning to you a recollection which will never go out of my mind. Last year I paid a visit to the Crystal Palace, in London ; in that palace, as you know, are collected specimens of all kinds of inventions, it is, so to say, an encyclopædia of human skill. I walked about amidst all those machines, all those instruments, all those statues of great men, and I was seized with this thought : if it were possible for a nation to disappear suddenly from the surface of the earth, and if at the same time all that that nation had invented were to disappear from this palace, our poor little Russia, our orthodox Russia, may plunge itself into Tartary without breaking a screw

or disarranging a single pin; all would remain peacefully in its place, for the samovar, the bark shoes, and the knout—our most important productions—have not even been invented by ourselves. The disappearance of the Sandwich Islands would produce more effect; their natives have invented a variety of lances and pirogues, and the visitors would observe their absence. Our old inventions come from the East, our new ones come from the West, and yet we continue to dispute about the originality of art and national industry. Some young people have even discovered a Russian science, a Russian arithmetic: two and two do make four among us as well as elsewhere, but more *pompously*, it would seem.”

“Stop, Sozouthe Ivanovich,” exclaimed Litvinof. “We nevertheless send many things to the universal exhibitions, and the

European nations supply themselves with many necessities from us."

"Yes, they get brute matter from us; but observe, sir, that these brute productions are superior only in consequence of circumstances at which we should lament: our hogs' bristles, for instance, are long and strong, because the animal is thin; our leather is thick and solid, because the cows are lean; and our tallow is good, because there are fragments of flesh left in it. But why should I enlarge upon this? you are studying technology, you know more about it than I do. They talk to me of the aptitude of Russia: well, here are our proprietors bitterly complaining and sustaining immense losses, because there is no machine in existence for drying, which reduces them to the necessity of putting their sheaves into ovens, just as they did in the time of

Rurick; those ovens cause terrible waste, and constantly burn the grain. The proprietors continue to lament, and still they have no drying-machine. Now, what is the reason they have not such an apparatus? Germany does not require it; she thrashes the wheat after it has been dried by the sun, consequently such an invention there would be useless; and we are not capable of it, we are not capable even of that! In future, when I meet with one of those rough diamonds, one of those natural and inventive geniuses, I shall call out to him, 'Stop! where is your drying-apparatus?' But of course they are thinking about it. To pick up a cast-off boot, which has long since fallen from the feet of Saint Simon or Fourier, to place it upon our heads respectfully, and carry it about as a relic, we are capable of that effort; or

to compose a short article upon the historical and contemporaneous value of the proletaires in the principal towns of France, we can do that; but one day I asked one of these writers upon political economy, such as M. Vorochilof, to mention to me the names of twenty towns of that same France, and what do you think was the result? Before he could complete the list, the political economist found himself reduced to the necessity of naming Montfermeil, which he recollected through having found it in one of Paul de Kock's novels. At this moment an anecdote comes to my memory. One day I was going into a wood with a dog and a gun——"

"You are a sportsman, then?" inquired Litvinof.

"I shoot a little. I was going in search of snipes to a marsh which, I had been told,

was much frequented by sportsmen. I therefore went into the wood, which had been purchased by somebody who intended to dig it up; and I found that as usual a small hut, a sort of counting-house, had been built. At the door stood a clerk as fresh and smooth as a green pea, chuckling to himself over something which seemed to amuse him mightily. 'Where is the marsh?' I inquired. 'Are there any snipes there?' 'Come along, come along,' said he immediately, looking as pleased as though I had made him a present of a rouble. 'This is a splendid marsh; it is swarming with all sorts of wild birds, to such an extent that you won't know what to do with them.' I followed his instructions, and not only did I not find any wild birds, but I even discovered that the marsh itself had been for a long time dried up.

Well, will you have the goodness to inform me why a Russian always lies, the tradesman as well as the political economist?"

Litvinof made no answer, but contented herself with sighing.

"Enter into conversation with the latter," continued Potoughine, "upon the most difficult problems of social science, taken in general, without any positive facts—prrrr! off he goes like a bird which has had its wings untied. However, one day I succeeded in catching one of these birds; I used a capital trap, as you will see. I was discussing various 'questions,' as they are called, with one of our young men. As usual, he soon got very angry, denying, among other things, the necessity of marriage, with an obstinacy positively childish. I submitted several arguments, but it was just as though I was speaking to a wall. I

was despairing to enter upon any further efforts, when a bright idea came into my head. 'Will you allow me to make one observation?' I said (you must always be respectful to a greenhorn). 'You very much surprise me, sir. You are studying the natural sciences, and yet you have never brought your attention to bear upon the following phenomenon: all wild carnivorous animals and birds of prey, all which live by prey, toil for food for their young as well as for themselves. Now, you class man among the animals?' 'Of course,' replied the youngster, 'man is in general only a carnivorous animal.' 'Who works to gain food for his children as well as for himself?' 'No doubt,' he affirmed. 'You grant that,' I pursued. 'I am astonished then that you have never remarked that all these animals live in monogamy.' The greenhorn gave a

start. 'How do you know that?' 'Why look at the lion, the wolf, the fox, the vulture; it could not be otherwise, as you will see, if you reflect for a moment. It is not without difficulty that the male and female together succeed in finding nourishment for their young.' The greenhorn became thoughtful. 'In that case,' he added, 'the animal is not a model for man.' Here I called him an idealist, at which he was so mortified that he almost burst into tears.

"I was obliged to calm him by saying that I would not say anything about it to his companions. To deserve the qualification of idealist was no trifle. You see, sir, the youth of the present day are entirely deceived in their calculations. They imagine that the epoch for sustained and obscure toil is past; that it was very well for their old fathers to dig like moles, but that such toil

is much beneath them; they ought to act openly. They work! Dear little doves! Would they have their infants do the work? Let them jump into the hole and continue the dull labours which their fathers began."

There was a short silence.

"For my part, sir," continued Potoughine, "not only am I persuaded that we owe to civilization all that we possess in science, commerce, and jurisprudence, but I affirm further that even the sentiment of the beautiful and of poetry could only shoot forth and flourish under the influence of that civilization; and that what is called national and spontaneous work is only absurdity. Even in Homer the germs of a rich and refined civilization can be distinguished; love itself becomes purified by its contact with it. The slavophiles would gladly hang me for

such heresy, if they were not so tender-hearted; but I shall not give it up, and Madame Kokhanoski will vainly offer me her idyls in which the slave of nature is so glorified. I shall not respire that triple extract of Russian mingik, because I do not belong to that high society, which feels from time to time the need of making themselves believe that they are not entirely Frenchified, and for whose exclusive use such literature is produced and bound in Russian leather. I repeat, without civilization, there can be no poetry. Look back at the poetic ideal of primitive Russia. Love is always manifested as the consequence of a charm, a spell. It is infiltrated by the 'water of oblivion;' the effect is compared to land dried up or frozen. What is called our epic literature, alone among all others of Europe and Asia, does not furnish a typical couple

of beings who love each other; the hero 'sainte Russie' always commences his descriptions of those whom fate has allotted to him by maltreating them without mercy. But I will say no more of all this; I will only take the liberty of drawing your attention to the paintings which represent the '*jeune premier*,' the slave primitive and uncivilized. He wears a sable cloak stitched up all the seams; a party-coloured silk girdle surrounds his waist under the armpits, and his arms are buried in his sleeves; the collar of his pelisse, higher than his head, conceals his face in front and his neck behind; his cap is drawn down over his ears, and morocco-leather boots envelop his legs, rising to a point in front, and the heels are so high that a sparrow could fly under the centre of the foot. That is the poetic ideal of uncivilized Russia. Now, is that model pretty?

Does it offer much material either to the painter or the sculptor? and the young woman who has captivated the young man; and who has a face the colour of blood—— But I think you are not listening to me?”

Litvinof gave a start. He was not indeed listening to what Potoughine was saying; he was thinking—thinking obstinately of Irene, and of their last interview.

“Excuse me, Sozouthe Ivanovitch, but I want to renew my question respecting——”

“Respecting?”

“Respecting Madame Ratmirof.”

Potoughine folded his paper and put it in his pocket.

“You still wish to know how I made her acquaintance?”

“No, not exactly that; I want your opinion respecting the life she has led at

Petersburg. In a word, what kind of a life has it been?"

"I really don't know what to tell you, Gregory Mikhailovitch. I have been on rather intimate terms with Madame Ratmirof, but it came about quite by chance, and did not endure long. I did not frequent the society in which she moved, and therefore what passed is unknown to me. Of course I have heard something, but, you know, tittle-tattle is not confined to democratic circles, and it had very little interest for me. However, I perceive," he added after a momentary silence, "that she seems to occupy your thoughts a good deal."

"Yes; we have conversed together twice, rather unreservedly, and I cannot help asking myself whether she is sincere."

Potoughine cast down his eyes.

"When she is angry she is sincere, like

all passionate women. Sometimes pride also prevents her from practising deception."

"Then she is proud? I thought rather that she was capricious."

"Proud as Lucifer, but that is nothing."

"I fancied that she sometimes exaggerated."

"That again is nothing; she is not the less sincere. But where do you expect to find the truth? The best of those women are gangrened to the marrow of their bones."

"But, Sozouthe Ivanovitch, call to mind, have you not yourself called her your friend? Did you not take me to her almost by force?"

"What has that to do with it? She asked me to bring you, and I said to myself, 'Why not?' And as to the friendship—yes, I am really her friend. She is

not without good qualities; she is kind, that is to say generous; in other words, she gives to others what she does not exactly require herself. Besides, you must know her as well as I do."

"I knew Irene Pavlovna ten years ago; since that time——"

"Ah! Gregory Mikhailovitch, what are you saying? Do characters change? As you are at your cradle, so do you go to your grave. Perhaps"—here Potoughine bent forward—"perhaps you are afraid of falling into her hands? That is possible, but could one escape from such hands?"

Litvinof put on a forced smile.

"You think so?"

"You could not escape. Man is feeble, woman is tenacious; chance is all-powerful; to resign yourself to a life free from excitement is difficult; to resign yourself com-

pletely is impossible; and here you find beauty and sympathy, warmth and light; how could you escape? You spring forward like a child towards its nurse. Afterwards, no doubt, in all such cases, comes coldness, gloom, and void; and then you become unfit for anything, unable to understand anything. At first you imagine that you care nothing for love, and then you seem as though you could not live without it."

Litvinof looked at Potoughine, and it again struck him that he had never before met a living being so isolated and so unhappy. Gloomy, livid, his head bent down, and his hands crossed upon his knee, he sat immovable, smiling dejectedly. Litvinof felt sincere pity for this poor, honest, melancholy being.

"Irene Pavlovna," he said, in a low

voice, "spoke to me, among other things, of an acquaintance of hers, who was called, if I do not forget, Belsky or Dolsky——"

Potoughine fixed a mournful regard upon Litvinof.

"Ah!" said he, in a hollow voice. "Then she has talked of that to you. Well, why not? But now," he added, gaping in a forced manner, "it is time to go home to dinner. Good-day."

And springing from the seat, he strode away rapidly, before Litvinof had time to utter a word. Vexation took the place of compassion; vexation, be it understood, with himself. For anything like indiscretion he had a great antipathy; he had wished to express to Potoughine his sympathy; and instead of that, he had only made a clumsy allusion; and he returned to his apartments with considerable discontent at his heart.

"She is gangrened to the marrow of her bones," he repeated to himself, time after time, "proud as Lucifer! She, that woman who almost fell at my knees, proud! proud, and not capricious!"

Litvinof tried, but without success, to drive the image of Irene from his mind. He would not think of his intended, for he felt that that day she would not have his thoughts entirely. He resolved to await the end of the affair, without giving himself any trouble about it. That end could not fail to come, and Litvinof never suspected that there could be anything unusual or alarming in it. He decided thus, but still the image of Irene did not leave him, and each of her words obstinately returned to his memory.

Not long after he reached home, the waiter brought him a note which ran thus—

"If you have nothing to do this evening, come and see me; I shall not be alone, I shall have company, and you will have an opportunity of seeing our circle more closely. I very much want you to see it; I have a presentiment that it will appear in all its lustre. You must judge for yourself the atmosphere which I respire here. Come if you can; I shall be happy to see you, and you will enjoy yourself. Prove to me that our explanation of to-day has rendered all misunderstanding impossible for the future.

"Your devoted, I."

Litvinof put on a dress-coat and a white tie, and accepted the invitation.

"There can be nothing very serious in it," he thought to himself on the way. "Why not examine *them*? It will satisfy my curiosity." A few days since, it was

not a feeling of curiosity, but of repugnance, which he had felt for these people.

He walked rapidly, with his hat over his eyes, and a forced smile upon his lips; and as he passed, Bambaef, sitting before the Weber café, pointed him out to Vorochilof and Pichtchalkin, exclaiming solemnly—

“Do you see that man? He is a stone! a rock, a lump of granite!”

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

